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NARRATIVE

OF THE

CAPTIVITY OF AN OFFICER,

(Captain Richd. Bennett
Royal Regt.

WHO FELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE

2946

BURMĀHS

DURING THE LATE WAR.

Madras:

PRINTED AT THE ASYLUM PRESS,

1827.

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PREFACE.

IT is with inducements of no little weight that the following sheets are now offered for the perusal of the public : the advantage of Novelty to the subject, and also a well-remembered remark to the Narrator, by a fellow-prisoner dying under the lash of persecution, that, " one half of the world has but little idea of what the other half suffers," have, together with the persuasions of kind and intelligent friends, been the means of bringing into notice these few incidents connected with more important events of the late war in Burmah.

If an honest, and unvarnished recital of facts, delineated with the unpretending pen of a Soldier, afford any thing like amusement to an enquiring public, the Narrator's object will be fully accomplished ; and he will feel gratified with the idea of having discharged his duty to Society, by recording transactions of a singular and interesting nature, and by pointing out, to the best of his ability, the eccentricities of a people who are but little known.

The writer's peculiar position amongst the Burmahs will naturally excite an additional interest for his Narrative ; while at the same time,

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he presumes to hope, that very circumstance will plead for manifold indulgences, and not the less so when a generous public is aware that the captive possessed no means of assisting frail memory with note-books or memoranda.

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In the month of November, and during the rainy Season, of the year 1825, when my Regiment was quartered in Prome, and formed part of the Army advancing towards the capital of the Dominions of Ava, under Sir Archibald Campbell; it was my misfortune to experience so much illness that I was obliged to apply for a Sick Certificate. The usual documents being presented to the Commander of the Forces, four months leave of absence was granted to me, for the purpose of proceeding to Madras for the recovery of my health.

About 8 o'clock A. M. on the 24th November, I left Prome on my way to Rangoon, in company with Dr. Sandford our Surgeon, who had also obtained a Sick Certificate. We entertained but little doubt respecting the prudence and safety of going down the river by ourselves, although the distance was upwards of three hundred miles. Troops in considerable number had recently arrived, and, moreover, several Officers had just preceded us in a similar way. We got provided with two Boats for ourselves, and baggage. One of these only arrived the day before from Rangoon bringing some men of our own Regiment; so we naturally concluded the greatest confidence might be placed in the Burmahs to whom it belonged.

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The other Boat was the property of Dr. Sandford, and, not having a sufficiency of Servants to row it, we were necessitated to hire some of the natives. This circumstance I believe to be the origin of our misfortunes. We were foolish enough to take into our employ the first who offered themselves, without ascertaining any thing regarding their families or characters. As might be expected, a plot was laid to betray us into the hands of the enemy. Many little circumstances have since occurred to my mind which ought to have roused our suspicion. On arriving at Pedown, for instance, one of the party left us, who, I have no doubt ran forward to give intelligence of our approach. As we advanced, we observed many fires on our right and left, and a few families were escaping from different villages in their boats. From these we learnt that parties had arrived from the Burmah Army, who were plundering and devastating in all directions, and treating most cruelly all those who were supposed to succour or even favor the English. Our Boatmen expressed no fear and would not think of retracing our way to Pedown which I proposed. They pointed to a village on the western side of the river, about 30 miles from Prome, and gave us to understand they wished to land there, in order to obtain a few more hands, and likewise to make enquiries. As every thing appeared to be perfectly quiet, and unmolested

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by marauders, we allowed them to do so. The inhabitants were sauntering carelessly on the shore, and a number of Boats lay moored along the banks. In short, there was not the slightest indication of disturbance, or of any thing that could lead one to suspect an hostile party was in the neighbourhood as at the other villages. We had no sooner brought to, than we were deserted by the whole of our people. In the course of ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour, when I found none of them returned, I went on shore to discover what they were doing, still not crediting a vile and deliberate treachery on their part. I requested some of the loungers to conduct me to the Myo-thoo-ghee, or head man of the place, and assist me in searching for the Boatmen; but it was to no purpose. All at once I found myself surrounded by about twenty Burmahs, of a decided hostile appearance, some with swords, some with bamboos, and others had merely cords in their hands. To make resistance, with the prospect of escape, I foresaw was impossible to be attended with a chance of success, and could only tend to exasperate my captors: so I determined in my own mind passively to submit to this sudden dilemma. However, after receiving a few blows, and fancying I perceived amongst the party one of the Boatmen, my feelings became enraged, and I drew a Pistol out of my pocket. In an instant my arm

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was seized, and for my attempt at vengeance one of them drew his sword and gave me a cut on the head with the back of it. The wound was slight, but deluged me with blood, which heightened the horrible spectacle I must now have exhibited. My neck, my arms, my body, my thighs and legs were encircled with ropes, and I was beaten most unmercifully. They immediately stripped me of all my clothes, except my Trowsers, Shirt and flannel Waistcoat, and then dragged me into an adjacent compound. Here, I was left with a Guard, along with three Chinese, who had not long fallen into their hands, while the party went to the Boats for Dr. Sandford. In a short time the Doctor and his two Servants, all we had, were brought to the same place, enduring similar treatment. Every brutal insult and outrage were now offered us; and awful, indeed, were the moments when led into the jungle with the apparent determination of sacrificing us forthwith. Such a multiplicity of cords about our persons, and swords brandishing over our heads, what could we expect but instant death? The all-seeing eye of Providence still befriended us, his merciful ears were not closed against our cries and lamentations. He rescued us from the hands of the blood-thirsty, and turned their hearts at this critical period; at a time we deemed each pace our last, and each tree our gibbet. Suddenly we were hailed by a voice,

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at some distance in our rear, intimating fresh instructions had been issued regarding our disposal. On being conducted back to the compound, we found our Baggage had been collected, and an arrangement made for it to be conveyed to some distant place. About 5 o'clock that evening we again moved off, in a new direction. It was some consolation to be relieved from the ropes round our thighs and legs. Those which fastened our arms behind, and also those round our necks and bodies, still remained and were given in charge of a stout attendant. In this manner we were forced through the Country, crossing occasionally Nullahs up to our thighs in water and mud. A complaint was answered by a Stick and the word "Jow"—a word borrowed, I conceive, from their Hindostanee Invaders. After five or six hours marching we halted at a Camp, which I imagine could not be very far from Pedown. Many chiefs of rank had assembled here, who appeared quite delighted at our Capture. On our introduction they were very haughty and severe in their expressions. One of them, a little mean-looking wretch, perched himself on a chair, and appeared to consider it most heroical to give Dr. Sandford a heavy blow on the top of his head with the flat of a Sword. The Chieftains now regaled themselves with the good things we had provided for our maintenance to Rangoon. In

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a short time we had fresh occasion for alarm by the revelry and uproar which soon prevailed, produced, as my reader may anticipate, by the exhilirating effects of Brandy and Wine. However, we were happy in no other annoyance resulting from this than seeing them retire severally from the scene, each ludicrously decked out in some portion of our apparel. The Doctor's late malicious friend assumed his chair again, as if in judgment, in a pair of socks and shoes; others sported a flannel waist-coat, or a shirt, all of which, especially a blanket, were considered in their own opinion extremely comfortable and becoming. Our Trunks were broken open in various ways, some at the bottom and others at the top. We received not the slightest relaxation of our sufferings at this place, but were teazed incessantly for explanation of the several articles they had got possession of; such as portable Soup, &c. Long before dawn we started again and passed over, with much expedition, wet Paddy Fields, Nullahs and stony Roads. With these obstacles, be it remembered, we had lost our shoes and caps, and were quite exhausted with the fatigues of the night. On our way we heard the sound of firing, and concluded it proceeded from Pedown, where Captain Deane of "The Royals" was stationed with a Detachment. It was, at the earliest, about 12 o'clock on the 25th November, when we reached another Camp, and for the first time

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our arms were freed from cords. Those round Dr. Sandford's had been bound so cruelly tight, that, in consequence, the nerves of his right arm became suspended or contracted to such a degree that many days elapsed before he could raise his thumb, and months previous to his regaining a tolerable use of that hand. A kind boy at this place, a son of some person of consequence, no sooner perceived the wound on my head than he immediately applied to it some cool leaves, and afterwards some Salve spread on a piece of paper. In the afternoon a Rajah of high rank arrived from Ava. At first he scarcely deigned to give us a glance; in a little time, however, his heart became softened and his conduct proved to be more satisfactory than we could possibly expect. Through the means of one of his attendants, who possessed a slight knowledge of Hindostanee, and the Doctor's Servants, we contrived to win the good graces of this haughty Chieftain. We displayed the machinery of our watches, for the chief part of our Baggage still accompanied us, and explained the use of many European articles, which to him were wonderful curiosities. On telling him many of our things had been stolen, and that out of 500 Rupees not more than 250 were left, he dispatched Emissaries to the places we had stopped at. These little circumstances appeased him, and ever afterwards, he appeared more gracious in his de-

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portment, and often said to us "ma-thay-boo," (you are not to die). In the course of this day we received some food. It consisted of very inferior rice and a small cup of vegetables which nevertheless was considered highly acceptable, and a token likewise of future kindness. During our stay in this Camp we lived under a tamarind tree, with nothing but a common mat to sleep upon. Our numerous attendants, or rather guards, kept up most excellent fires every night, on their own account, which essentially assisted us in enduring the variety of exposures it was now our fate to encounter; namely, the heat of the day, the coldness of the night, together with the heavy morning dews, which always prevail at this season of the year. One night some more of our Baggage arrived, and the Bearers were ordered to be beaten, either for attempting to run away or for dilatoriness. We were awakened most disagreeably by their cries. Their arms were fastened behind while a person struck with his elbow the delinquent on the back or the chest. This operation is called "Townning" and is a favourite mode of punishment amongst the Burmahs. When admitted one morning to an audience with the Rajah, I begged hard for some clothes, and, to my joy, succeeded in having my boat cloak, forage cap, a pair of shoes, two pair of trowsers, and an old hair brush, returned to me. To Dr. Sandford were given a flannel dressing

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gown, a pair of trowsers and a blue cap. There being now no apprehension of pursuit, our afflictions were moderately alleviated. The ropes, notwithstanding, were substituted by more humiliating though less annoying appendages. These consisted of a pair of chains clenched round the ancles, and an iron ring round the neck. To the latter a cord was attached and put under charge of a Soldier.

30th Nov.—Having rested a little from our bodily fatigues, we became the more anxious to learn our future destiny. We rejoiced rather in observing about 3 o'clock P. M. symptoms of our departure by the preparations made for the conveyance of our Baggage. Before this I had endeavoured by all the rhetoric I could summon, chiefly by signs, to induce the Rajah to devise means for our ransom. He fully understood my meaning and consulted with his people. The particulars of course were unintelligible to me. It was now intimated we should be sent to Ava where the King, we were assured, would treat us very kindly. This was a word of comfort, although our prospect inspired nothing but gloomy apprehensions. The capital we knew to be at least 300 miles distant: and I deemed it beyond my strength, especially in my weak state, to be dragged, as it were, through jungles and Nullas in such an unnatural and unfeeling manner, with any hopes of surviving at the end of our march. After

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four or five hours travelling we halted at a temporary encampment, our feet much swollen from the weight of the irons which had been merely unlinked.

1*st Dec.*—After our usual breakfast of rice and vegetables, a Hackery with a pair of Bullocks drove up for our accommodation, in the prosecution of our journey. Any carriage was preferable to walking, which, in fact, had become an impossibility from weakness, sore feet, &c. The miseries attendant on this rude machine may readily be conceived. The intense heat of the Sun, the circumstance of our feet not being at liberty, together with a constant violent jolting, the latter affording amusement to our driver and guards, all conspired to diminish the comfort of riding. It strikes me it must have been the evening of this day we reached a remarkably pretty cantonment, not far in my opinion from Youngdoung. The situation laid at the bottom of a well-wooded range of hills, abounding with Tamarind trees of the finest description, which threw their welcome shelter over the different buildings and huts, affording at the same time a most picturesque appearance. Considerable time elapsed previous to our admission to the presence of the Commandant. During the delay our annoyances were excessive, arising from the impertinence and mockery of the mob: indeed, this was the case at every halting

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place, but in general our grievances arose from curiosity rather than a disposition to insult. Every one wished to examine the palms of our hands; tracing and comparing the creases with their own, either thinking them to be different, or perhaps amusing themselves with their favorite art of palmistry. My old hair brush promoted much merriment, and oftentimes when overcome with the toils of the day, I have been compelled to make use of it for the amusement of a host of Spectators. On this occasion it required no inconsiderable alertness to retain my boat cloak, and my small stock of clothes. Many a wishful eye glanced at the clasp of my cloak; some tried to steal a Button under the impression it concealed a piece of gold or silver. At length came a relief from their importunities by our admittance into the interior of a slight Stockade. We met with a good reception from the Rajah, who, ordered us some arrack and a supper of fowl and pumpkin broth. An account of the baggage was rendered by the Officers in command of our escort.

Dec. 2d.—In the morning the rural and Military appearance of the Cantonment appeared really interesting and imposing. The most conspicuous object was the Chieftain's Bungalow, constructed of Bamboo and neatly thatched with a kind of Cadjan. It was surrounded with a spacious verandah, the roof

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composed of broad leaves. Under this we had passed the night. The shadowing branches of the Tamarind trees under which peeped, in different directions, the Soldiers huts, with their bright-polished weapons regularly piled in front, not forgetting the gay plumes attached to the lances ; the neatness and cleanliness which prevailed throughout the contiguous offices ; together with the striking characteristic forms of every being around us, all combined to give a novel and peculiar effect to the scene, partaking of a romantic and martial nature. The utmost propriety reigned in each department. Not the slightest communication being permitted with the Rajah, without its being accompanied by the most profound respect, I may almost term it, adoration. His Officers, when in attendance, were never allowed to be in any other position than on their knees, with their hands joined in front, in a supplicating attitude. All his orders were written by clerks who were always in readiness whenever he was pleased to dictate. Indeed, nothing can exceed the rigid exactness of the Burmahs in detail and theory. The failure of their grandest schemes and operations is therefore the more surprising. The fact is, their economy consists in bestowing particular attention in discovering the habitations of the families of their Soldiers ; while their qualifications are totally disregarded. Then, in the event of desertion, the resentment of the King

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is held out as a threat to their wives and children. Nothing but coercion and arbitrary discipline is ever exercised; and seldom, if ever, any instillation of patriotic ideas, or encouragements to gallantry.

Ponies were this day provided for our use, with comfortable cloth saddles stuffed with wool: the stirrups, however, were too short and small, and particularly inconvenient for the rugged and steep ascent and descent of the hills over which we journeyed this and the following day. No incidents worthy of record occurred; sometimes we rode for 14 or 15 miles through thick bamboo jungles with scarcely the track of a road observable. The few villages that lay in our route appeared paltry and insignificant, nevertheless, abundantly supplied, with cattle and poultry.

Unlike the habitations of the peasantry of India, the Burmahs construct theirs of slender materials and invariably raised several feet from the ground. The simple bamboo, lavished so bountifully on their country by providence, and a huge knife, (called Dāh,) comprise their materials and implements. This valuable production is substantial enough to afford support to the whole edifice; and, with the Dāh the toughest as also the finest ties can be slipped from it. The walls, partitions, and flooring are formed of plaited bamboo. The remaining part, namely the roof is first formed

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by a bamboo frame-work which is covered with a broad grass. This is previously prepared by being woven on sticks about four feet in length, and affords sufficient shelter throughout a monsoon. Such is the facility of erecting a comfortable abode, that a native of importance when travelling, sends forwards his directions for places of rest to be raised wherever he intends to sojourn, however temporary his stay may be, and this fashion is adopted in the neighbourhood of large Towns, it being agreeable and consistent with their ideas of gentility. In their hamlets the Burmahs are far from being cleanly. The houses in general are constructed without any regard to comfort or order, and the space in their vicinity, especially in the wet weather, presents one complete slough. Ponies, oxen, pigs, and poultry, all ramble in uninterrupted liberty. The place usually assigned to them is under the house, which thereby becomes a sink of filth, increased by the refuse of the house conveniently dispatched through the bamboo floor. On the platform, or first landing-place it is frequently customary to feed the cattle. Here, also, the domestics and inferior tenants of the house sleep. This domesticated medley may in some degree account for the remarkable tameness of the Burman Ponies. The Mansions of the nigher orders, and the edifices appropriated to the Priests were constructed of solid timber, and beautified very

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often with highly ornamental and curious workmanship ; the food of the villagers consisted simply in rice, pumpkins, chillies and various other vegetables. It filled me with wonder how the Soldiers who attended us endured so much toil on sustenance apparently most unnourishing. The principals of our party behaved uniformly kind and attentive, as far as they dared : every day we partook of two excellent meals of fowl soup and rice ; and whenever procurable a copious draught of a weak spirit distilled or fermented from rice. The contributors of these supplies, I suspect, received but a sorry recompense from the officers of the King's party. It frequently required some compulsive measures before the necessary provisions could be obtained. I remember, on one occasion, the head man of the village, in appearance a second Falstaff upon, shewing rather a refractory spirit, was ordered a " Townning," and his operators by no means spared him ; our hardships at this period, such as, exposure all day, and the same at night, were nothing more than what the Burmahs naturally underwent. Travelling often 30 or 40 miles a day rendered sleep so welcome, we cared little for the inconvenience, or rather utter deficiency of its artificial auxiliaries. The same friends, particular in seeing us fed, denied the comfort of washing and still deemed it indispensible to secure the links of our chains at the end of each day's march.

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4th Dec.—About an hour after noon we reached a Town containing a number of Pagodas and Pownghee houses: its name, I think, must be Sulane-myo, having learnt at the capital it was the position taken by Mane-za-ghee a brother of the Queen's, with the view of intercepting the progress of our Army from Arracan. We soon perceived preparations making for our introduction to some person of more than ordinary consequence, on coming to a newly erected stockade, in front of which were planted a considerable number of Gingals. After a due arrangement of the procession, the gates were thrown open, and a long line of Soldiers on each side of the road, and about three feet from one another, met our view. They were squatting like tailors, holding their firelocks in a perpendicular direction, the stocks resting on the ground. So much ceremony inspired some unpleasant sensations. Making a turn, to the right, we entered a second enclosure, and found Prince Mane-za-ghee surrounded with all the emblems of barbaric splendour. His bungalow resembled the one I before described, but possessed superior rural elegance. Amongst other things, a handsome scarlet Sofa ostentatiously displayed itself in front; while, in the back ground, appeared the Chieftain on his chair of State surmounted with a huge bunch of Peacock's feathers, an emblem denoting his connexion with royal blood. In

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front, the guards formed a half circle, and bands of Music, and Dancing Girls richly clad, filled up the centre. Fine feathered Tamarind Trees likewise contributed to enhance this picturesque, but not to me diverting scene. After complying with the requsite obeisance, Mane-za-ghee waved his hand, and we were immediately withdrawn. It required very little stretch of the fancy to perceive the indifference with which he pretended to observe us, and turned his attention to the every-day routine of amusements. In the midst of the bustle our ears were saluted by a volley of Gingals. For the remainder of the evening we were exposed and exhibited; and afterwards tolerably lodged in a shed, and treated with a most excellent supper of fowl and pork currie; served up in handsome utensils: our chains remained unlinked, but, in lieu a strong guard was posted.

From 4th to 10th Dec.—These days we pursued our arduous journey without meeting any events deserving notice. Our guard became perfectly familiar and Jocular; and good naturedly protected us from the teazing inquisitiveness of the rabble, whenever it encroached on the bounds of personal annoyance. About the 8th, the country assumed a fertile and cultivated aspect: Fields of Paddy and Indian Wheat more frequently abounded, and in the vicinity of every little village herds of fine Cattle were grazing.

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Towards the afternoon of the 10th, we reached Saue-byoo-gyone, a town of vast extent, encompassed by a stockade similar to the one at Rangoon. The side (the Southern or South-Western) that first struck our observation, I should deem inaccessible, owing to an extensive morass, at least 6 or 700 yards broad, running along its front. I observed no particular natural defence round either of the other sides. Plantations and religious Buildings ran close up to the walls. At Ava, I learnt the Prince of Surrawuddy took up his residence at this place, which contained a number of new and handsome Pagodas. Immediately on our entrance an immense portion of the Inhabitants, as usual assembled: some of whom were evidently desirous of being extremely offensive, if not violent. The Police (Men with Canes about 4 yards in length) had no little difficulty in restraining the symptoms of a turbulent and vindictive spirit.

We had flattered ourselves with the hopes of gaining here an intimation of our probable fate. In this we experienced disappointment; and when taken to the Lotoo, the place of public business, merely a few questions relative to our Baggage were asked. The Interpreter, a Mussulman, although finely clothed in crimson velvet, apparently dreaded any communication beyond his office, from the suspicious nature of the Burmahs. I only gleaned that he was tak-

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en prisoner, or detained in the country, about seven years ago, and has never since been permitted to leave it.

After having suffered, most provokingly, from an insulting mob, all of a sudden we found ourselves lodged in a dungeon. This reverse of treatment excited all our old fears: we little expected to be cast amongst the criminals, some of whom were burthened with five pair of chains, and others confined in the stocks. I anticipated nothing less than a formal sacrifice, especially on being called out for the purpose of having an additional incumbrance fastened on my legs, the iron ring round my neck was also removed. The rough performance of these operations did not at all tend to diminish the unpleasant sensations my position gave birth to.

Our dreadful suspense was, however, in some degree softened by the arrival of a pretty good supper; together by a visit from our friends of the escort. They affirmed that no intention existed of doing us harm, and our unbecoming lodging was a matter of convenience and security. They likewise, earnestly, repeated their consolations as to a favorable reception at the capital. Thus were our hopes and spirits buoyed up, notwithstanding the humiliating predicament of the present.

11*th Dec.*—At least, an hour before dawn we emerged out of our dismal billet, to be put

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into a Bullock-Cart: and, to the best of my judgment, it must have been past 11 o'clock, after a tedious ride, ere we reached the banks of the Irrawuddy at Zee-byo-gwane, a place comprised, by appearances, of temporary tenements. The distance we travelled this morning, I calculate to be nearly fourteen miles: and on the route laid several extensive towns thickly populated. Indeed, it was the most active part of the country I had ever seen, either before or since my capture. The roads, save an open plain, three or four miles in breadth, towards the river, seemed alive with the busy passing objects. I believe it is in this direction the Arracan road debouches on the Irrawuddy.

The sight of the river promised an amelioration of the fatigues consequent on our wearisome journey: at the lowest estimation, our progress could not be rated at less than two hundred miles, which we had accomplished within eleven days. The Ponies occasionally were poor, sore-backed, miserable creatures. From my observations altogether of the country I had beheld, more especially during the first five or six days, I conclude it to be impervious to a large body of Europeans from want of encamping ground and a supply of water. Several days we made incredible long marches through nothing but a continued bamboo jungle: and a compliment is certainly due to our guards on foot for their persevering labours. The people

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who conveyed our Trunks were sometimes changed twice or thrice before night-time. The last 50 or 60 miles abounded with highly cultivated lands and the roads were super-excellent.

Nothing but a bunch of plantains and a basket of dirty rice were given us for breakfast; it was also unpleasant to observe the appointment of a new escort. We expressed our discontent to the best of our power and condescended to eat the plantains. The keenness of our appetites, however, in a little time rendered the rice both palatable and acceptable. Presently after this galloped up three people of distinction mounted upon beautiful Ponies, richly but most clumsily caparisoned: in short, the decorations, consisting of green cords and tassels, added to immense appendages to the saddle called Kadown, intended, I conceive for ornament and the comfort or protection of the knees, nearly obscured the shape of the animals. The Kadowns are made of Buffalo's hide and generally are gilded. They compose (or act as) in reality, the flaps of the saddles. To the chief I complained of the coarseness of my fare, explaining, to the best of my ability, how liberally we had hitherto been treated in that respect: and concluded my appeal by telling him Dr. Sandford and I were Rajahs. At the termination of the bustle of arranging the Boats and fixing the baggage, this new grandee took us,

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into an adjoining house where we participated, in the luxuries that had been prepared for his own Dinner ; such as fried fish, curries, prawns, &c.

Our embarkation took place about 3 o'clock this afternoon ; not, as I anticipated, in some of the country boats having a covering at one end, but in a second description of War boats. We occupied three ; each had its stand of arms, and between 30 and 40 Paddlers. Dr. Sandford and I were lodged in the centre of the Commandant's, who had a slight cabin made astern for his accommodation. This person to our satisfaction proved to be our late entertainer.

The new mode of conveyance, if not attended with a diminution of misery, had certainly the advantage of novelty ; for this exhibition of the Burmah Navy afforded a lively and diverting scene. The Paddlers accompanied their regular and rapid motions with corresponding songs and cries, far from being unharmonious ; while the boatswains at the bow, displayed uncommon agility in keeping time and making every one alive to his duty. Notwithstanding melancholy thoughts, I confess I enjoyed the fun of racing and other sportive occurrences. At sun-set we moored along the banks : no village being adjacent we remained unsheltered for the whole night. A heavy rain with a cold piercing wind came on and did not

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abate till morning : sleep was out of the question, although we needed it ; indeed, our companions kept us in continual motion about a mat, which could screen a couple of us from the wind, as to the right of which we respectively disputed.

12*th Dec.*—We experienced, naturally, the wretchedly uncomfortable consequences of a pitiless night ; neither had we an opportunity of drying our wet garments till our reaching some town, or other, about noon. I am inclined to imagine the Burmahs are not so hardy as they appear to be, on account of three sturdy domestics of the Rajah's being quite knocked up from the night's sufferings. They evinced their weakness, in the morning, by vomiting, together with fits of the ague : one, in particular, we left on shore perfectly incapacitated to proceed.

From the 12th up to the 17th, I have no recollection of any incidents having transpired worthy of remark. During that interval we continued paddling, or tracking along the banks, our way onward. The Rajah, a person of mild and affable deportment, far superior to the generality of his countrymen, always behaved liberally. He frequently attended our meals, not entertaining a high idea of the hospitality or honesty of his servants which he had reasonable grounds to suspect. Each night we slept on board, and missing the accustomed fires on

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shore, we found it so miserably cold, that the morn was welcomed with delight to prosecute the voyage.

17*th Dec.*—This day we understood would bring us to the haven, where we hoped to meet with some relaxation to our suspense ; or, at least, with people in some degree civilized. Moving tediously under the lee of steep banks, we suddenly and unexpectedly perceived a high brick wall, about 70 or 80 yards from the edge of the river : presently, we observed a vast concourse of the Natives assembled to witness our approach. The highest glee and merriment seemed to pervade all classes, especially the boat people, who appeared proud of the honor of conveying two white men to their King. They renewed, with double zeal, their skill, activity, and talents, in racing and singing ; while two, in our own boat, more facetious than the rest, stood up and exhibited a variety of gestures and grimaces ; each striving to outdo the other in comically representing the most horrible contortions of their countenances, or antic motions with their arms and legs.

Such was our reception under the walls of the capital of His Golden-footed Majesty, little or no alarm existed, owing to good humour being the predominant sentiment existing, without the slightest indication of insult. Poor Sandford, decked in his flannel dressing gown, and

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I in my boat cloak, which, in spite of the sun's heat they insisted I should wear, sat posted in our chairs mutually wondering what would be the result of this original introduction. In this ludicrous style we passed, I may safely say, a length of wall not less than a mile and a half before we pulled up. On our landing, we found a person in office waiting for us on the beach, who immediately ordered our chains to be unlinked. We then followed him for some time in the direction of the palace; but, he, entering an inner enclosure, left us exposed without protection to the impertinences of the populace, as was so often unnecessarily the case. Several hours elapsed previous to our admission inside, when we were hurried beyond our strength, and made to run as if the King's life depended on our celerity: reaching the palace gates, our shoes were taken off, (a villain took this opportunity of stealing mine.) Next came to our view the stately gilded palace; to a corner of which we were conducted, from whence we suspected his Majesty in private viewed his Captives. Here, we were compelled to go through the ceremony of making three distinct salams, or according to the Burmahs *Sheekohs*, with our foreheads down to the ground: after this, we were led to the Lotoo. We found at this place all the public Ministers ranged in front of a platform, reclining or lolling on their mats with little

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stools or cushions for pillows. Now, thought I, for a new turn in the state of my personal affairs; surely I shall, at least, have the pleasure of once more beholding some white faces. Sometime transpired before an interpreter appeared; at length, one approached, who certainly once boasted of an European complexion; but now, its nature foreboded little consolation. In an instant my heart misgave me. It needed no scrutinizing to notice he had been subjected to a long and rigorous imprisonment—his features wore too evidently the dire effects of persecution and starvation. Sad and dejected he slowly advanced towards the Lotoo, seemingly afraid to turn his emaciated face towards us until administrating the office of interpretation. Two other interpreters soon after appeared: one, the favorite spy of the King, John Leavindiere, a French half-cast; the other an old half-cast Portuguese Padre, who had been residing at Rangoon for many years; but being considered as a foreigner, it was deemed necessary to make him a prisoner; and ever since he had been kept in confinement, with several pair of chains on his legs. Two writers being prepared, they now commenced questioning us with great precision. Dr. Sandford was removed to a distance, in order that I might first be importuned by myself. I was then asked to tell my name, my native country, my birth place,

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and also the day I was made prisoner; after this, they enquired most minutely regarding my trunks, and the baggage I had lost; and also what I knew relative to the Doctor's. This being settled, an infinity of questions were given concerning Pedown: in short, they manifested the most ardent anxiety as to this position. My answers yielded, as I afterwards learnt, but little satisfaction, and were essentially different from what they anticipated; so much so, that some of them bit their lips, and flew into a tremendous passion, on being told their repeated attacks, with a force vastly superior in numbers, were repulsed with facility by a small detachment, composed of one hundred Europeans, and about as many Sepoys, under the command of Captain Deane of the Royals. This brush, as the Captain modestly named it in his Dispatch, is a striking instance of deliberate judgment, founded on scientific principles, together with undaunted, but cautious, intrepidity, triumphing over the simultaneous efforts of undisciplined hosts. The Burman Ministers of the cabinet could not boast of Generals, like our own, faithful with the Sword and faithful with the Pen: with respect to Pedown, the most contradictory accounts had been sent them. At length, came, to my secret dread, the important point of ascertaining the state of the Troops under Sir A. Campbell. As yet the interpreter had not ventured to exchange a

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single word with me, although I every now and then, besought him to give me an idea of what I might expect. Finding now that I hesitated in my answers, he signified the Ministers were simply going through with the usual routine of common-place questions, to which I must, of necessity, respond. My pleading ignorance as to the numerical strength proved to be of no avail. I told them I commanded a Company, better understood and interpreted to them, one hundred men: and that each Regiment consisted of ten Companies. This, they affirmed, was no news to them; and insisted on my stating the number of casualties that lately happened; and likewise, the present European strength of the several Departments. The interpreter here remarked, perhaps as a kindly hint, that the Burmahs were confident our Force did not exceed in number four thousand Europeans and about three thousand Natives. At this period it was by no means so great. On the strength of this, I acknowledged my own Corps from sickness was reduced to about eight hundred. (The Royals could scarce muster effectively, above half that number.) Concerning other Regiments I still maintained that, being an humble Subaltern I had not the ability, or ever had the means, of gaining the required information. As to the description and number of our boats, another grand object, I really felt myself perfectly at a loss; for I had not the smallest idea

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of our Marine strength. When requested to notify the number of Boats capable of bearing Guns, I could only reply, I guessed it to be about three hundred, thinking of those belonging to the Commissariat. Upon the whole, they did not regard my answers, relative to the Troops, as rigidly as might be expected. The fact is, that being notoriously addicted to deceit and falsity themselves, they consequently attach but little credit to the words of their enemies. The Governor General's Body Guard inspired very great terror ; and they asked if it was probable that any more cavalry would join the Army. I did not hesitate to declare the arrival of a whole Regiment of Cavalry was expected ; and likewise an addition of Troops from England. These questions were repeated through the Portuguese Padre, who scarce understood a word of English. John Leavindiere acted as a spy on all parties. At last it was the Doctor's turn to undergo a similar examination. I was not removed so far as to prevent my hearing the persons who examined us completely puzzle themselves by their over-methodical way of proceeding. From the way in which they classed their Queries, the Doctor, somehow or other, gave them to understand, that the Marquis of Huntley, Colonel Armstrong, and Colonel Campbell, all commanded the Royal Regiment ; thus introducing matter foreign to the purpose. After an attempt

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at elucidation ; and, they had obliterated what they had previously written ; they recommenced with the only thing requisite, namely that Captain Hopkins was the present Commandant. It must have been nearly 8 o'clock before the accomplishment of this weighty task, when all my fears and suspicions naturally incited by the forlorn and squalid appearance of the Interpreters were fully verified. An old man, without any farther ceremony, forthwith led us off in the dark to a Dungeon more dismal than the one we had honored at Sane-byoo-gyone. His first act was to fasten two pair of chains on our ancles ; and then, he called to a demon-looking knave, of the name of Antony, a half-cast Portuguese, to officiate as Interpreter. "The old man," whom I shall so designate in preference to his better known appellation of 'Old Nick,' also deemed it necessary, in his character of Jail-keeper, to ascertain our Names and Countries, which were duly committed to writing. In spite of our woeful situation I could not refrain from actually smiling at the oddity of this Man's person and manners. A horrid Dungeon in our view, I cannot account how such unseasonable sensations, however momentary, could influence my risible faculties ; My "Old Man," in his person, was tall, thin, and grey-headed ; and on his cheeks were tattooed the distinguishing marks, or forms, of rings and fetters : a noisy and boisterous prat-

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tle, in a humorous tone of voice, completed the peculiarities of this original genius, well known to most of those misguided foreigners, who, from the fate of war, or thirst for gold, happen to visit this barbarous capital. In summing up my description, I trust neither the old gentleman, nor my reader will ever be offended by my hinting my suspicions of his pedigree. Since that eventful period, I have learnt that Murderers, Thieves, &c. &c., sometimes are pardoned, and afterwards employed as Executioners, Thief-takers, Gaolers, and the like. But, they are first branded; perhaps with a circle on each cheek, and on the breast with the words, "Loo thrat" (murderer), "Thōo-kōh" (thief), as the case may be.

All the fanciful and flattering hopes cherished in the desolate Jungles, amid the generous offices of our followers, vanished, as if heart-struck, on our being thrust into an inner part of the Dungeon. A flame, emitted from the country petroleum-earth-oil enabled us to view distinctly this horrible abode. No words of mine can depict the terrors of the scene. Here, were confined alike criminals, deserters, and captives. To dwell on the picture of this shocking Prison is no pleasing task; still, for the information of my reader I shall give a faint outline of it. First, it is a grand feature and instrument of the Burman Government; and sure to be the doom of all its opposers. The

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King's family, Ministers of State, as well as the lowest peasants, are equally liable to become its tenants. Mown-shway-tha, a former Governor of Rangoon, and allied by blood to His Majesty, had been confined in it since Rangoon was taken. The Burmah Law has no respect for persons. The system of governance, like in the convict Hulks in England, depends in a great measure, on the exertions of a portion of the Prisoners, who, under promise of pardon, and a present enjoyment of relaxation of their own labour, support the goalers authority. The building, substantially built of timber, had not a single window; nor any apertures, save one door, and a few slight cracks in the roof, by which is some air indeed admitted: A small proportion, got admission by the circumstance of the floor being raised a couple of feet and the boards not being compactly joined together; this, however, was of little use in the interior apartment. At the head of the subordinate agents was Antony, who told me he was a Spy of Major Jackson, the Deputy Quarter Master General, and had been lodged there on suspicion. He, and the other goalers were furnished with a stout Bamboo with which they beat their fellow prisoners most unmercifully. They were to all intents and purposes, admirably adapted to carry into execution the orders of Government. These commands frequently were sanguin-

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ary and cruel to a degree, requiring the hands of villains hardened in vice ; such as had not hearts to feel, nor consciences to tremble, and who sought only to please their despotic Masters. In this asylum of misery, Mr. Judson and Mr. Price, two American Missionaries, remained in confinement for the space of fifteen months, loaded occasionally with five pair of chains : their wives were allowed to send them a daily supply of rice and whatever other provisions they could procure. It may be thought incredible, but these gentlemen assured me the principal cause of their detention was on account of their having white faces ; and as they spoke the same language, as the English, the Burmahs did not know, that they were not also the same people, until the conferences with Sir A. C., at Nyown-bane-Zike, when an article in the Terms of Peace, stating that Foreigners, including of course Americans, should not be admitted into the Country, or employed by the Burmah Monarch, unfolded to their minds the distinction. The discovery of this, was the first circumstance that induced the Burmahs to moderate the sufferings of the Missionaries. The person who had interpreted at the Lotoo turned out to be Mr. Price. All eyes, on that occasion, were sharply fixed on him ; and not a word escaped his lips but in the hearing of John, in order to discover whether his demeanor evinced a partiali-

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ty for the prisoners : A misinterpretation, they told him, should be punished by a red hot iron being applied to his tongue. He informed me, however, that the king, after the first few days, behaved generously to all the European prisoners ; and advised me to put my trust in God, and depend on his care for provision. This assurance, together with the many consolations as to good treatment uttered by our attendants on the march ; likewise with what we gleaned from Antony respecting other prisoners similarly situated, held out to us the hope of a speedy release. The early part of the night we spent in conversation with Antony, who showed an inclination to grant us all the favors he could bestow. With his Bamboo he gained us a sufficiency of room to lie at full length and gave us two or three cheroots. Never shall I forget the fiend-like countenance of this man : it justly acted, which I suppose it did, as a passport to the confidence of the Old Man, who in the day time trusted him with the charge of an outer gate, where he had an ample opportunity of providing for himself, either by charity or plunder.

18*th Dec.*—Fatigue and gloominess united their potent effects towards lessening the tediousness of the latter hours of the night. In the morning Antony, and several others, went outside to watch the doors while the scanty meals of the prisoners were brought to them.

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The regularity lately existing was not succeeded by bustle and confusion in consequence of the want of light. The whole day passed over without any notice whatever being taken of the Doctor or me. Towards sun-set when nature, from weariness, and a fast since the morning of the day before, demanded nourishment, our situation became truly deplorable. An idea of starvation crossed our minds. At dusk Antony returned, and soon afterwards the Old Man came his rounds : to him I applied for some rice and received the promise of having some given me next morning. In the mean time Antony had directions to furnish us with a portion of his gleanings which, notwithstanding its coarseness and dirtiness we managed to eat. To the poor fellows who were starving it must have been galling in the extreme to see Antony and the other " Knights of the Bamboo" fill their rapacious stomachs with what they had defrauded from them during the day. Antony still asserted that in three or four days we should be removed to a place where all the European prisoners were kept ; and actually described the size of the room, adding, that Master would then get " plenty beef—plenty fowl—plenty pork."

19*th Dec.*—About 8 o'clock this morning, we were called outside to partake of a fine Mess of Rice and Curry ; the " Old Man" took particular pains to explain through the

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medium of Antony, that he had no "King's order" to feed us; and the present meal was the gift of his good Lady, who from motives of curiosity had come to pay us a visit. The two Servants received some rice of an inferior discription. By the day-light we descried more minutely the wretched forms of our companions in misery—a scene that inspired me with more dreadful impressions of our melancholy and humiliating condition—their emaciated bodies, scarcely covered by a rag, filled us with direful anticipations, and we were glad to enter darkness that these heart-rending objects might be rendered less visible. Many of these poor creatures were suffering for crimes of comparative insignificance, and sinking under a long series of afflictions. During the imprisonment of Mr. Judson, an instance of cruelty occurred in this den of horrors, which I can only compare to the bastile at Constantinople, as described in Anastasius, seldom equalled by tyrants of any Court. The victim, I allude to, was one of the household of Mane-za-ghee, the Queen's brother: as bad a man as ever cursed the earth with his presence; and well worthy of his fury of a Sister, Maynoo. It was the misfortune of this domestic to conceive an ardent attachment for a young girl whom the Prince had destined to add to the number of his numerous concubines. The poor fellow suspecting his Master's intentions, made an attempt to run off with his

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favorite: but, on being discovered a few days afterwards, he became the object of a revenge that could only be satisfied by deliberate and exquisite torture. He was immediately cast into Jail and the strictest injunctions issued to the 'Old Man' as to his treatment and the quantity of his food. After many weeks of rigorous usage, with his feet constantly in the Stocks, the ferocity of Mane-za-ghee's vindictive disposition, so far from being softened, became more hardened. His next orders were to apply a species of torture by means of a bamboo fastened between the legs: the nature of this I do not understand, but am told it is so contrived as to raise the body, and to afford it an insufficient and tantalizing support. Even this agonising condition did not satisfy the licentious Despot. At last they raised up the feet of the unhappy wretch high in the Stocks and suspended his arms towards the roof; thereby not allowing his back to be scarcely supported on the floor. Thus tormented, he remained, as Mr. Judson witnessed, for seven days, entreating every one around him to terminate his existence. Mane-za-ghee's daily question used to be—"Is he dead yet?" adding sometimes "How is it he lives so long?" The tenacity of life displayed in this case, excited the compassion of the Jail-keeper and his minions who at length were weary of inflicting such an excess of torment on one so little deserving it.

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Unwilling to use more violence than positively ordered, they had recourse to others to perpetrate a Deed, which by this time might well be termed an act of charity. One afternoon, as Mr. Judson and Mr. Price were sitting on a Bench outside the Prison-door, an indulgence occasionally granted, they mutually remarked a kind of prognosticating stillness. Not a soul was to be seen in the compound, save Antony motionless at the gate, as a spectacle of foreboding warning to the mindful passenger. Presently they heard three distinct blows accompanied with groans given to some one inside. In a few minutes the Old Man returned and sagaciously enquired how matters were going on, when some one answered that all was correct except the prisoner in the stocks who had just died. The perpetrator of the deed required but a little rice and salt as a reward for his services. It was not till the following morning the body was removed. So happy was Mane-za-ghee, to hear of the demise of his rival, that he sent several *emissaries* to prove the certainty of the fact, and for the satisfaction of the last, the body, although buried, was positively taken up for his inspection.

The *20th, 21st, and 22d.*—Notwithstanding the interest created by our arrival, these days passed without our receiving any farther notice. Our fare was quite in unison with our

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dreary dwelling ; the heat of the day excessive, and water was not procurable at all times. To add to our distress, a large body of deserters arrived from Munipoor and Thee-a-day. The prison was now crammed in every corner : those who remained were linked two and two, and strung on a Bamboo in the compound. In this manner they were exposed night and day ; and generally plundered of all their clothes. From those inside I learnt how the Burman Army fled, whenever the British appeared. To me this was a matter of no surprise, witnessing every day, as I did, the tyrannical proceedings of the Court ; and the natives themselves declaring that nothing could induce them to face the Europeans. Amongst them were several boys of 12 and 13 years of age, who looked upon us as the authors of their calamities ; and asked why we came to make disturbances in their country. With the assistance of a Rangoon lad, (the son of a victualler according to his own account,) who understood Hindostanee, and one of the Doctor's servants, I made myself acquainted with the sentiments of the deserters. They allowed, as we often heard, that the king gave to each of them a donation of one hundred Tickals by way of encouragement ; but pleaded they were sorrily recompensed for a separation from their families, perhaps for three or four years, without any stipulated allowance for their maintenance ;

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and moreover under a constant trepidation for their safety. The deserters were chiefly peasants pressed on their lands for the war. Many of their wives I saw, at this period, secured in different places, some under the cells in the compound, and threatened with death should their husbands prove faithless to the Generals. The day of action gave the most favorable opportunity for desertion, the leaders themselves being the first to set the example. After a few days punishment, the run-aways are sent back to the Camp, their ideas of loyalty and patriotism, as may be supposed, but little enlarged. The Natives of Munipoor paid us the highest deference and apparently regarded the Burmahs with disdain. Towards the close of the 22d, a messenger came for the purpose of taking Dr. Sandford out of prison, and left word that in two or three days time I should follow. This separation I felt severely and it added considerably to my sorrows; Antony at night told me, the Doctor was required to attend on the King's Brother, who had just arrived at the Palace in a sickly state of health; nothing but my own sorrowful reflection now remained conducible to avert desponding thoughts, or to beguile the tedious hours. I had no sharer in misfortune present with me: no one but fierce Antony from whom I could expect a shadow of kindness, and no food whatever had been given me this day. Although I believed little of what I heard, still, feeling of

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confidence, buoyed up in my mind, and strengthened my hopes of not being consigned to death by the Ministers. I still retained possession of my Boat-cloak, while the clothes of the other Prisoners were seized on their entrance. I could not fancy the interpreter had a desire to impress me with false hopes, by saying, all the European Prisoners were treated well after a Season; neither could I perceive any motives for Antony, and others to affirm it was customary to put all the Captives in Prison for a few days on their first arrival.

23d, 24th, and 25th December—My feeble pen, not my memory, fails me in describing the miseries I endured, so as to convey an adequate conception to the minds of those unacquainted with the brutal customs of an Eastern Jail. I may venture to say, few British Officers ever underwent, for the time, an equal accumulation of evils. The anguish of my mind, I have no words to pourtray:—independently of the prospect of starvation, I had numberless calamities to anticipate, even for a temporary abode. Many of the ill-fated beings around me were on the verge of death from inanition; others, in a high state of fever; and others, covered with sores. Several women, without discrimination, were cast in the prison-house: one, I will remember, labouring most acutely under the distressing effects of absolute poverty. To witness her, with an infant in her

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arms, and debility causing her own breasts to flow, supplicating in vain for water; furnished to my mind lighter considerations of my own sufferings. Providence I trusted, by whom I had been so long supported, amid the most apparent dangers, would not desert me; I prayed to him who had preserved me from the peril of the sword, and the pestilence of the climate; and often wished I had done so before with the same ardour and spirit. In the mornings and evenings, when allowed a few moments of fresh air, I felt the deepest humiliation. The glare of the glorious Sun after many hours of darkness manifested a bitter contrast, so also did the skeleton figures of the inmates of the "Shades," to the robust and hearty forms of their stern oppressors. The whole day now went by, and although it was at hand, not a drop of water to quench my thirst could I procure. My clothes had become abominably filthy and loaded with Vermin. I was also considerably troubled with ring-worms; and, in consequence, my blood kept in continual fermentation. Since the Doctor had been removed, no meal had been given me by the Old Man: a handful of rice, bestowed now and then by a Prisoner, composed my sustenance. The total neglect of the Jail-keeper, I believe, arose from my remaining so long unnoticed by the Ministers. At length, on the afternoon of the 25th, I was sent for by one of the Attenwoons, or Inferior Ministers; however,

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when my chains were knocked off, I thought I was being conducted to the residence of the European Prisoners. After a few minutes walk, I entered the palace yard, and presently came to the office of the Minister, Moung Byouck. Here, to my astonishment, I found Dr. Sandford together with Mr. Price, and John and the Portuguese Padre. The Doctor's appearance foreboded nothing favorable ; for he still wore the same dirty clothes, and had not enjoyed the luxury of a shave. After making my Sheekōh, to the great Man, I was directed to remain under a Verandah about 12 yards distant. My suspence at this period rose to its highest pitch,and I could not divine what could be the object of the present consultation. I eagerly watched the motions of every one ; and derived a degree of comfort in observing the Doctor smile, and that he was often referred to. John now approached me and enquired if I knew whether the Commissioners had arrived at Rangoon, and what were their names. I told him I had every reason to believe that Mr. Robertson, and also another Commissioner, whose name I could not recollect, had recently landed in the Country, and, to all probability, were on their way to Prome. Soon after this, I was beckoned to the Council, and asked if I would take a letter to the British Camp on my parole. I replied in the affirmative, inwardly rejoicing at the prospect of even acquainting my friends that I was still

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in the land of the Living. Nothing could exceed my surprise in finding myself transported in a moment from a dungeon to a secret political chamber, and there talking as familiarly with the Ministers of State, as with the lowest of their captives. Moung Byouck, desired me to sit down by the side of him, with my feet tacked behind out of his sight, and pretended to receive me with the tenderest cordiality. His consolations on the fortune of war, he administered verbally, and practically, by pulling my nose, and my hair, and all other sort of queer tricks, in hopes, I imagine, of raising my spirits and impressing one with high ideas of his condescending good nature; likewise his general liberal disposition towards the English, whom he professed exceedingly to admire. I took this opportunity of complaining of my aggravations in Jail; and told him it was beyond possibility for my nature to sustain so many calamities, being in a most debilitated state of health, which my appearance substantially justified. The Old Man, according to his orders, was to be threatened with death, if ever he neglected giving me rice every day; and in the mean time an application was to be made to the King for my removal out of his clutches. At this instant, six or seven fresh prisoners arrived. The only European amongst them was a person of the name of MacGregor, an Agent to a Merchant, and formerly Steward of the Ship Samdanny, that brought part of

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the Royals from Calcutta to Rangoon. Another prisoner was an old Armenian Merchant. Both were taken prisoners in some part of the district of Pedown on their way to Rangoon. Moung-Byouck, behaved in an affable manner towards MacGregor, who, not being a military character, was esteemed by him the most eligible person to be the bearer of a Letter to Sir A. Campbell. After much conversation on various topics, we were all, except the Doctor, sent to the "place of horrors," the same sad mansion of despair from which I had flattered myself I had been released with some jaggery only, given me by the Minister; but John told me that on the morrow, I should be required again to write the Letter in question. On my return, I ventured to solicit the Old Man for some rice, it being three days since he had given me any: he refusing, I exchanged a portion of my jaggery with one of the prisoners for some rice. This bargain was not accomplished without infinite trouble and discussion on both sides, and the point was at length submitted to the decision of the King's butler, who for some trifling offence had incurred the royal displeasure. I had great difficulty in preserving what remained till the next day from the grasps of my hungry companions, most of whom had relatives or friends, to supply them with a sufficiency to support nature. The deserters had a dinner of rice and plantains once

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a day; but so much extortion and exaction was practised on every one, that the different meals were generally reduced one half.

26th Dec.—According to my calculation, I conjectured this to be Christmas Day. On contrasting, my present state with those domestic endearments so peculiarly elicited during that joyful season, I became quite overcome with my afflictions. MacGregor, brought with him no news to brighten my hopes. This poor man's treatment was similar to my own, except that he had not the good fortune to have any clothes restored to him. Exposed for upwards of one hundred miles on the river, to cold winds and heavy dews, without either jacket or other covering, it may well be supposed that on his arrival he was afflicted with many serious complaints. Knowing him to be of not a very temperate habit, and that his constitution was shaken in consequence, I thought he would not long survive his present calamities. The Old Man, and his Demons treated him very severely, and beat him oftentimes without any provocation. At first, however, MacGregor could not help expressing that the warmth of the place was actually a comfort to him. Although Antony declared that a Doctor visited the Jail every day, still, all our entreaties for medical aid were in vain, in order that we should have no opportunity of complaining. My boat-cloak, which would have been

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a great prize in the event of my death, constituted probably another reason for their conduct to me. About 12 o'clock, some coarse, dirty rice, and leaves, spread on the top of an old basket, were brought to us, with appetites such as we possessed, roast beef and plum-pudding would not have been better relished. Antony, however, on explaining in the presence of the Jail-keeper that " Master must scarf that now, and Old Man give better dinner by and bye," I left most of my share of this meal for Dr. Sandford's servant, with whom I made a point of sharing whatever I could obtain. When I perceived through the cracks in the tiles the declension of the Sun, I began to be very uneasy at not being called to the Minister's office, for I fully expected to be released at my next visit. The day passed and left me more unhappy than ever; towards dusk, as the door opened, I got a glimpse of the Old Man, and made signs for the promised meal; imagine my astonishment, when he flew into a terrible rage, and the villainous interpreter Antony asked how I could expect more than one dinner a day. This was annoying in the extreme, still more so, to see the cruel Old Man take up a stick and beat every one around him; however, on lifting his arm towards me, I doubled my fist and defied him; for I always remarked he was more fearful of striking than starving me. At this period MacGregor, the Armenian

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Merchant, and myself were lodged in the part next to the door, in a kind of an enclosed verandah which surrounded the inner apartment. This was considered an indulgence, inasmuch as the chances were greater of our obtaining now and then a handful of rice. Gentle reader, pardon my initiating you so minutely in the mysteries of the dungeon. The number of Prisoners had increased so much, that it took some time to pack them in their sitting posture, for the night; there must have been nearly one hundred and fifty, in short the Jail was as crowded as possible; on being thrust into the interior, Antony remarked to the Old Man, there was no farther use to trouble himself on my account as it was evident the Minister had forsaken me. In consequence of my refractory behaviour no pains were taken to preserve the little extra room for me, as usual. I had to crowd and manage as well as I could with the rest. I had now been kept here nine days and began to feel myself exhausted and overcome by so many privations. My bowels became painful, and I dreaded that Dysentery or Dhiarrhæ, which generally attended me in a slight degree, would soon seize me more strongly. Through the medium of the Armenian Merchant, who spoke fluently both English and Burmah, Antony's nocturnal disclosures aggravated my distress. I was warned of the impropriety of seeking redress by com-

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plaints, should an opportunity occur. For my digestion Antony reminded me, that I was completely in the power of the Old Man, who never accustomed himself to consult his conscience in any case ; and that he would in all probability privately remove me from the Jail in the dead of the night, and put an end to my existence, reporting to the Minister next morning that I had died. The many horrible barbarities I had heard of, and seen me inclined, to think such a transaction was far from being incredible ; so I entreated Antony, if it were in his power, to restore me into favour, that, at least, I might be allowed room to stretch my legs, upon condition I would for the future tacitly submit to my unhappy lot, a little extra space was granted ; but which I soon lost when nature from weariness compelled the sleepy tenants to recline as much as possible. Heaped with the almost naked prisoners, in almost despair, we passed this sad melancholy night. The painful state of my feelings at this awful crisis I am at a loss to describe. It was " the winter of my discontent." I trust never to reflect on those bitter moments without the sincerest emotions of gratitude to my Creator, for rescuing me, as it were, from this " valley of the shadow of death."

27th.—I willingly obeyed the summons to attend at Moung-Byouck's Office, which arrived in the course of this morning. The Doc-

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tor and interpreters I found sitting as before. The exercise of walking completely overpowered me; and my agitation became so violent and apparent that it could not escape the notice of the Minister. In spite of the threats held out the night before, I complained again of the harshness of the Jail-keeper's usage; and said, unless they mitigated their manifold persecutions I could not survive. My spirits gradually revived on being promised a liberation. A great bustle existed this day, presenting another diverting specimen of Burman customs:—we were, in reality, in their secret Cabinet. The Office itself was little better than a substantial shed, the floor raised about three feet from the ground, and that of the first landing place, on which we were squatted, about a foot lower. Moung-Byouck, in his person, was a man of low stature, marked with the small pox and very ugly. Nature, however, as if in recompense for blemished features, bountifully enriched him with more than an ordinary share of those shrewd, crafty talents so peculiar to Eastern Princes. Nothing could exceed the activity and facility he displayed in settling and dispatching the various causes laid for his consideration and approval. At one time he would be stretched on a mat dictating to his writers; at another, he would appear at the other end of the platform examining or hearing reports. On this occasion, I remember, after reading

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an unsatisfactory document, he threw it away, some yards off, with the highest disdain, and consequentially stalked about perfectly enraged. He would soon, however, enter upon other business. In the midst of all this, I was far from being forgotten, being troubled every now and then, with the most ridiculous questions. Moung-Byouck, asked if I had heard of Bundoolah ; and told me, exposing at the same time, as he thought, his own athletic limbs, that he was equally as renowned as that far-famed Hero. He talked much of Colonel Tidy, the Adjutant General of the Bengal Troops, whom he had met at the conferences of Myoun-bane-zike; and now, from that officer's urbanity, esteemed him as his most particular friend. To all his familiarities, he signified, I was to reply with freedom, without being reserved by the dignity of his rank. Amongst other things, he requested I would display my prowess with the Sword by fighting with the best of his Soldiers. To this proposal I remarked his forgetfulness of my feeble state. Some writing materials, namely a black coarse paper and white pencil, were now handed me, and I was directed to take a side view of the Minister in the act of dictating a letter, which turned out to be one that I was to transpose in my own words, to be sent to the British Camp. A copy being finished, I solicited to take it to my

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new lodging, in hopes of having more convenience. I felt also too weak and nervous that day, either to exercise my faculties or my pen. My joy on being liberated may readily be conceived, for I was so much reduced that fresh air and wholesome food could alone recover me. My host was to be Moung-Yanshen, a kind of Constable. How singularly are some trifles stamped on the memory ! I recollect, as if yesterday, how I shuddered at Antony's salute after I had passed him by, " Master, Master, where Master going." On arriving at my new residence, Moung-Yanshen, deemed it expedient to fasten a pair of chains on my legs, his head being security for my not running away. His next consideration was to provide me a bed ; accordingly, a Bullock's hide, and an old Mattrass full of holes, were stretched on the platform, where the Cows and Ponies were feeding. After being released from Jail, I fancied every thing very comfortable, especially when I got a Saddle for a Pillow, than which, having being a long time without one, I know not a greater comfort. Many a time have my poor arms ached when alternately officiating in that capacity. Some rice and plantains were now given me for supper ; after which, a light, being brought, signs were made for my proceeding with the letter. Thus ludicrously situated, I had to indite, amid the cattle and a host of Savages, the first epistle Major Jackson the Quarter Master General

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received from me, the substance of which had been dictated by Moung-Byouck. I had not the means of retaining a copy : its principal object, however, was to acquaint the Ingil-ick, as they frequently called us, of our safety and the especial kindness, we, and all the other prisoners, met with at the capital. Dr. Sandford had to write one of similar meaning at his house which he addressed to Colonel Tidy. Our friends were to be entreated for our sakes to exert all their influence in promoting the blessings of peace. The letters then went on to state, that the war originated and was actually entered upon without the knowledge and concurrence of the king, who was now ardently desirous for an amicable adjustment of the unhappy differences existing, upon principles best calculated to produce a permanent reconciliation between the two nations. "Things as they were," according to a literal translation of a favorite expression of theirs, was proposed as the most likely to yield this desired effect. The advantages of trade were, however, held out as an inducement. Indeed commerce in general, they declared, should be so facilitated, and rendered so lucrative, that the Company would soon be indemnified for the expenses of the War. After writing a few lines, and my various annoyances not at all moderating, it became necessary to postpone my task till a more seasonable opportunity.

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28*th*.—I awoke this morning, inhaling the pure fresh air with delight, and renewed my attempt towards finishing the Letter. I had scarce commenced when it was taken away from me notwithstanding my reiterated remonstrances to the contrary. Not having any thing particular on which to fix my attention, I now looked around to discover what kind of beings were my new associates, several of whom had slept soundly and happily in the midst of litter and confusion. Moung-Yanshen, his wife, and two sons inhabited the upper part of the house; and five or six people, who acted as domestics, the platform. About 8 o'clock, I had given me a small cup of Pork Currie and Rice for breakfast: while eating this, my Landlady appeared at the door above grinning curiosity in a most provoking manner, pretending to be both astonished and amused with my actions. Soon after, I went again to the office of the Minister of the Interior where the whole day was consumed before the Letter was finally closed and dispatched; much time having been lost in taking copies, making translations, and in examinations by all the interpreters; not excepting Mrs. Judson, who was numbered amongst the Prisoners. I did not dare to interpose any thing in my Letter relative to the true state of my situation; but depended on the style of the superlative generosity of the Burmahs, being well aware, it would as easily point out that

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my Letter had been exacted; and, that this shallow device could not be attended with any evil consequences, while it established the fact that I had not been sacrificed in the Jungles, the usual fate of their Prisoners of war.

The Minister, or Attenwoon, this day joked as usual and asked numberless questions; and before we departed, he presented the Doctor and me with a Tickal each. The kindness we latterly experienced on the march, and a dawn of good treatment again appearing, together with an assurance that our imprisonment was an act enforced without the knowledge of Government (this however it was ridiculous to assert) tended in some degree to revive my former prepossessions in favor of the Burmans. My notions I conceived chiefly from reading Symes's Embassy, who bestows the highest encomiums on the equity of the Burman Laws and Customs. Upon enquiry, I fancy Symes must have been grossly deceived in many points. He had no other interpreter than an old crafty Armenian, firmly attached to the King; and who felt an interest in representing every matter in the most partial and favorable light. Hence, however ably he enlightened the public regarding the manners and customs of the Country, it may be presumed, the same ability and fidelity did not exist in describing the policy of the government: and while he, in truth, delineated their admirable codes, he little suspected, not-

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withstanding their theoretical virtues ; how ineffectual those codes are when reduced to practice.

During my last visit to the secret council chamber I could easily observe that difference of opinion prevailed among the Ministers, and their Woondoucks (Assistants). From the latter I heard an anecdote perhaps worthy of recital. It arose from the circumstance of a long delay when some sheets of English paper were sent for. During the interval, much argument there was and warm discussion ; in the midst of which, a Woondouck exclaimed, " Oh how I wish the English would come;" to this, another replied, " You are wrong and unguarded in speaking thus in the presence of the Minister " " Oh," answered the first, " I alluded to the English paper only." This double entendre Mr. Price had the goodness to repeat to me at the time, in order to give me an idea of the existing division ; and that many persons, if not friends to the British, were, at least, inimical to their own government.

Before I left the office, Moung-Byouck's dinner arrived, the relics of which I was most happy to consume. It was dusk previous to my again reaching Moung-Yanshen's habitation, where, as last night, I soon found myself surrounded with cattle and a host of unsophisticated beings. In two or three hours, I was left in tolerable quiet without any thing peculiar to attract

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my attention. I considered on the strange vicissitudes of my life, so full of hopes and fears as to my ultimate escape. Thank God, I ejaculated, that I am now free from the society of criminals and delinquents encumbered with chains and disease. Here, I may, by degrees, become familar with my fate ; and have a by far better chance of preserving my health till happier times. Moung-Byouck promised to procure me some fresh clothes, which I much needed, having only those given me about the 28th November, and which I had never been allowed to wash.

29th Dec.—My rest being incessantly disturbed during the night by the feeding of the cattle, I determined if practicable, to seek a corner to myself. This object I accomplished not without much difficulty. The best reward for my pains consisted in the formation of a kind of kennel, under the steps, about six in number, leading to the upper part of the house. My materials were composed solely of bulls' hides, of which there were plenty at hand. Of course I caused no little entertainment to my hostess and her domestics, who laughed most heartily at my outlandish actions. However, in spite of the black masses of cobwebs in all directions, for the Burmahs use fires without the convenience of chimnies, I contrived to screen myself, in a comparatively clean retreat, from the impertinent gaze of the passengers.

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Those who ventured near me, seemed as much in awe as if they were peeping in the den of a Lion or Tiger. Towards evening I walked about 50 or 60 yards in front of the house for the sake of exercise.

The immediate distresses of the jail becoming gradually effaced from my mind, made me reflect more on the deplorable and shocking condition to which I was reduced. The advantage of enjoying the open air I felt counterbalanced by the disagreeable sensations occasioned by exposure. I had no shoes, or socks; no clothes but a pair of ragged blue-cotton trowsers, a Shirt, and flannel Waistcoat, which five weeks ago had been deluged in blood. My boat Cloak, *was too cumbersome to wear at all times, tho' it was in the eyes of a Burmah very handsome.* Thus apparelled, but with the annoyance of a pair of chains, similar to those of a convict in England, it may easily be fancied I found a degree of relative comfort in the privacy of my crib.

The first two or three days I spent in the house of Moung-Yanshen, vanished without leaving any incidents worthy of record. The peculiarities of my new companions contributed to beguile the melancholy time. The street ran close to a high brick wall, and afforded nothing interesting: it was, however, frequently filled with objects, which excited my commisseration.

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The walls of Ava had been recently erected; and, as yet, not the slightest appearance of a Rampart, or a support of any kind, on the inner side, was visible; and without which, in the event of a siege, they possessed no stability. The "King" about this period issued orders to make the walls defensible; but alas, the means of doing so were apparently as insignificant as his neglect hitherto was remarkable. I state but little in giving my opinion that had our army been more rapid in its movements since the affairs of the 1st, 2d and 5th December, and not been delayed by the conferences at Malown, the walls of the capital would have been found perfectly bare, and from their nature utterly useless. Often and often have I sympathized with the poor wretches and slaves doomed to raise a mass of earth round such an amazing extent of wall. It reminded me of Pharoah's tyranny over the children of Israel, but of course, on reflection, I naturally concluded that, if the stupendous Pyramids were the effects of despotism over an helpless race, the walls of Ava might be completed by a similar process. Every old man, woman, and child, was put in requisition to accomplish this undertaking. I had the satisfaction of witnessing its daily progress in front of my abode till its completion. From sunrise till sunset, hundreds were employed in conveying earth to the foot of the Wall, where it was

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promiscuously thrown, from the exterior: Each carried a basketful or a large lump, or perhaps five or six bricks. With such trifling material, overlooked by rigid taskmasters, the Ramparts were raised, and finished in a style that would have done credit to better Engineers. The height of the Wall, I guess to be between 25 and 30 feet; and was of sufficient width at top to admit of battlements, and a space of two or three feet in rear of them, on which musquetry could be placed: to the crest of this space, or terre-plain, the earth was raised with a base little more than equal to its height, and at certain stages, during the elevation, old bricks and other rubbish were more compactly fixed, in order to increase its solidity. The slope, admirably formed, had an edging of brick at its foot about eighteen inches in height. Some where about 150 yards from each other projected towers of a small description, and over the gateways were erected substantial platforms. These latter were surmounted with handsome roofs, in the same style as the religious edifices, which made them appear highly ornamental. I never trod on one of the platforms; but, from appearances, judge them capable of sustaining the heaviest pieces of ordnance, possessing a superior command, and likewise affording, in some degree, a cross-fire, an idea by no means unentertained, by the Burmahs. Still the walls are not at

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all calculated to resist the effects of a Battering train. Independent of being perpendicular, and unsupported by regular counter-forts or Buttresses, the bricks are of an inferior quality; and, moreover, the cement used, is of a crumbling and not adhesive nature. Their chief merit is a grand appearance, far out of proportion to the magnificence of the buildings contained within them, save the Palace and residences of the Royal Family.

The precise date I cannot recollect, for my memory fails me in some trifles, when I received one afternoon the apparel so long promised me. Being led to believe this was an act of munificence proceeding direct from the "Golden Presence," I certainly flattered myself I should be decently and comfortably clothed: picture my mortification, when an old canteen-case, with the bottom partly knocked out, that had formerly belonged to Dr. Sandford, was handed to me, containing the following articles; viz. three dirty, mouldy shirts, one ragged pair of trowsers, three pair of old socks, and two small towels, not forgetting a tattered dressing gown of gay manufacture. The inmates of the house bestowed their praises on my fine habiliments; while I sulked aloof. However, finding my chagrin of no avail, in the lapse of an hour or so, I even secreted my kit in my den, inwardly piqued at the shabbiness of the Royal Donor. His intentions, probably,

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were more generous; but then, although a King, he had no means of preventing their frustration. I had long found out that his orders were seldom obeyed in a conscientious manner. The brass nails on the Canteen case soon attracted the avaricious disposition of Moung Yanshen, whom, by the bye, I may as well honor by his English title of "Shark," acquired by his consummate extortion on some of the Prisoners. He and his Sons took the liberty of stealing some of the nails during the night, of which, although I was awake at the time, I pretended to be ignorant. On the following morning my first care was to secure the remainder in order to distribute them to whom I pleased. This put the Man in a tremendous rage, and the more to express his displeasure, besides a volly of abuse in his own language, he upset my kennel of Bull's hides. I only laughed at such outrageous conduct, being under no dread of his resentment, but demanded a return of the nails stolen from me during the night. To my astonishment one of his sons brought me a few, thereby acknowledging their meanness and covetousness. The nails were by far the most valuable part of the present, in a short time all my Town friends could sport half a dozen or so in their shoes.

I do not remember any thing particular occurring during the first fortnight in January to break an irksome monotony; except, to me

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the novel circumstance of hearing one afternoon the solemn sound of a Gong. All at once the natives working at the Ramparts threw down their baskets with the utmost precipitation and fled to secrete or prostrate themselves : all the fires in front or on one side of the houses were immediately extinguished : all clothes hanging out to dry were brought in : doors were closed, and, above all, I remarked the women took especial care not to be seen. Such unusual preparations I foresaw could only be followed by the presence of His Majesty of Burmah. The Shark at first shewed much eagerness to hide my person ; but I was as ardently desirous of having a sight of his Royal Master, whose retinue appeared while we were disputing the matter. I then covered myself with my Boat-cloak, and sat down on the road side by Moung Yanshen, who now insisted on my obeisance long before it was necessary ; and for fear I should fail, he kept tugging and elbowing me the whole time. Notwithstanding his vehement anxiety I believe I had often made better salams on more trivial occasions. The distant sound of the Gong, instantaneously answered by the rapid movements of the populace, and then succeeded by an almost miraculous tranquillity ; inspired me with sensations of awe, but did not abate the ardour of my curiosity. I found much difficulty in describing the golden Suite,

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which on other occasions I had far better opportunities of beholding; not from its peculiar pomp and pageantry, but from its general paltry and mean appearance. The leading part of the procession was composed of two men, carrying long Canes to enforce order when requisite; these were followed by two more bearing a Gong, which was sounded every four or five paces as a signal of the King's approach; next came a person of authority, whose duty it was to see that all honorary customs were complied with; then followed a long file of Soldiers, armed with firelocks and Lances, on each side of the road. The Soldiers were all shabbily accoutred, and I remember perceiving a great chip in the Barrel of one of the Musquets. Next came His Majesty's Palanqueen, in which, on this occasion, he was sitting. It was insignificantly studded with coloured glass, and the gilding on its clumsily ornamented top nearly worn off. The Ministers in attendance walked on either side, and immediately in front were carried two plain white chattahs. In the rear, first were the King's domestics; and then another body of Soldiers. Each of the former carried some necessary article; such as, a betel box, a chair, a goglet of water, cup, spitting-dish, cushion, mat, &c. &c. Behind the Soldiers a Poney, most gaudily and heavily caparisoned, was led, in readiness; also, two elephants, one of which was

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merely decked with cords and tassels while the other carried a Howdah. At the close of the cavalcade came a host of servants belonging to the Noblemen and Officers in waiting, each bearing his Master's betel-box, goglet, cup, &c.

His Majesty was sitting crossed legged chewing his chunam and betel, and chatting familiarly with his Ministers as he passed along. I watched in vain for those expressions of insuperable pride which I thought must necessarily be blended in the countenance of one, who flatters himself he has no equal on earth. He seemed cheerful and easy in his manners ; and, his dress, as simple and unincumbered as any of the Rajahs. I perceived nothing distinguishing, except that he wore no kind of head-dress. His hair, cut short and neatly trimmed, contributed, in my eyes, together with a fine large forehead and handsome features, to give him a very prepossessing mien. His august countenance was mild and expressive ; and I may add dignified, without denoting any symptoms of restraint or studied composure. He regarded me apparently with some interest, and remarked that I was quite a youth. With respect to the virtues of the Monarch I have universally heard but one opinion. The American Missionaries, and other Prisoners of War, who have long resided in Ava, all agree that the natural tendences of

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his heart are sympathy, benevolence, and charity, towards his fellow creatures: and that he is decidedly averse to sacrifice the lives of any of his subjects without a very particular cause. It is the belief also of the Gentlemen alluded to, that had not the King withheld his sanction, a formal sacrifice of all the Prisoners in the capital would have taken place as a propitiatory offering to the Gods. Such an oblation was frequently urged as necessary by the people who attributed the ill fortune of the nation to the non-adherence to their ancient customs. Many were the fatal cruelties inflicted on the Prisoners during the war, from the King permitting himself to be influenced by his capricious and vindictive courtiers. The better qualities of His Burman Majesty are counterpoised, by a weakness of mind and a general want of energy in swaying the sceptre.

21*st Jan.*—About this period Dr. Sandford and I met again at Moung Byouck's office for the purpose of sending a second letter to the British Camp. We endeavoured to point out the inutility of such a proceeding; and the Doctor refused positively to write again: however, our reluctance only made them more anxious to have their wishes acceded to, therefore fearing their resentment, it was but prudence on our part to do whatever they ordered in a case, from which nothing of a mischievous tendency could ensue. An absolute denial would, I have no doubt

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occasioned our immediate return to prison, where we should have been left to starvation and neglect. Moung Byouck, to gain our consent, did not use any threat; but endeavoured to fill our minds with erroneous impressions. He told us our first Epistles had been safely received; and that our friends were rejoiced on finding we were still alive; and, that our request regarding the mitigation of the Terms of Peace should be taken into consideration. All this we believed very feasible, but still saw no reason for the necessity of writing again. The Minister then went on to inform us that moderated Terms had just been received, which they considered to be the effects of our former letters; and now conjectured a repetition would be attended with similar success. Upon our requesting to know what was now demanded of them, he stated, with all the coolness imaginable, that, instead of the cession of the Countries of Arracan, Assam, Cachar, the Ports of Tavoy and Mergui, and 78 Burman Lacs of Tickals, nothing more were now required than Arracan, and four Lacs. Our Epistles were now to contain a long rhodomontade of the impossibility of inducing the King ever to consent to our proposals, he having sworn at his installation to transmit his empire, without diminution, to his posterity—an oath he was determined never to inviolate, and which had for ages been kept faithfully

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by all his predecessors. The tenets of his religion, it was likewise pleaded, prevented him from acceding to our Terms. For Arracan being also considered as the Mother Kingdom, its cession struck at the root of the Empire.

Previous to our departure, a Letter said to be sent by Sir A. Campbell was translated to us. It began, according to their own words from the Persian, by stating the writer "was only a Bri-"tish General; that, as he advanced with his "Army he conquered the different towns he "came to, one by one, but that he had no "pleasure in doing so; and therefore, advising "the Burmahs of his gradual approach towards "the Capital, he reminded them it would be far "better for them to accept the proffered condi-"tions of Peace than render themselves liable "to more severe ones." It was announced also in this Letter that communications with our Camp, accompanied with a white flag would at all times be allowed; and the persons of the bearers would be considered sacred.

I had no opportunity of seeing Dr. Sandford, but when we met to the secret Council Chamber. The Doctor lived in the same house with Mr. Price, which, although every thing bordered on poverty, on comparison with mine, possessed many advantages. The King's Interpreter was also an inmate with them, on purpose, as he acknowledged to me, that he might overhear the conversation that would in

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all probability occur between Sandford and Price. One day I had the pleasure of dining at their house. It was quite a luxury to sit in an old chair and to use a knife and fork, not forgetting the comfort of having one chest placed on the top of another to form a table; on which were placed some good fried fish and an excellent Curry. Such comparative enjoyment made me return to my own lodging rather discontented; so I began expostulating with the Lady of the "Shark" on her inhospitality: indeed had I not shewn myself occasionally, in some measure dissatisfied, my fare would have been miserably coarse.

25th Jan.—His Majesty this afternoon made another circuit round the walls of his capital. I was walking up and down in front of the house when I heard the sound of the Gong. Moung Yanshen being absent, I determined to act on this occasion more according to my own ideas: paying therefore no attention to the remonstrances of Madam and her Sons, I planted myself in the street, wrapped up in my boat-cloak, so as to see and be seen. No other person interfered, so under the impression that a "Cat may look at a King," I made no farther obeisance, on the approach of the "Golden Presence," than kneeling down and waving my hands, without bowing my head; but staring at the same time with the greatest *sang froid*. All the attendants,

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among whom I perceived the "Shark" looked very angry and seemed quite astounded at my temerity. My not being removed by compulsion encouraged my belief that the King is, as report says, uncommonly partial to foreigners. No Burmah would have dared to behave as I did, neither would a proud and barbarous Monarch, without a good disposition, have suffered such a liberty to pass over without immediate punishment. When His Majesty first observed me, he instantly looked towards the other side of the road; however, he soon changed his mind, and gave me the felicity of beholding his face within the distance of four or five yards. He seemed evidently much confused, as if doubting whether he should indulge his own curiosity or not. I confess I forgot myself as a Prisoner of War altogether. My spirits at the time were rather elated in consequence of the prevailing reports. My chains too, for the last two or three days, had been kept unlinked, so that I could secrete them under my trowsers. I, like most of my Countrymen, found nothing more humiliating, or more derogatory to my nature, than the odious custom of prostration to a superior: neither Dr. Sandford or myself ever acquitted ourselves on this point, except in cases of necessity, in a manner at all suitable to Burman ideas. Such feelings, encouraged by the mean appearance of the procession, can only ac-

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count for my behaviour, which, in another light, I deemed both unjustifiable and rash. The adventure at first quite delighted me, though in the sequel it proved a source of infinite mortification and apprehension. In the course of an hour afterwards, my Governor returned, bringing with him one of the "Knights of the Bamboo" for the express purpose of linking and securing my chains. This alarmed me considerably, still more so on being peremptorily ordered upstairs, (for I had now the privilege of living in a passage in the centre of the house) and signs made that my head would be taken off for my presumption. The whole family seemed now to delight in laughing at, and imitating, my actions, when the King passed; making them a subject of ridicule and merriment to all their neighbours and visitors. I once complained of their unpleasant behaviour to Moung Byouck, which had its desired effect, for ever afterwards they remembered I was not exactly a monkey.

26*th*.—The decapitating signs of Moung Yanshen banished sleep for the whole night: in the morning, however, my suspense, as to their truth or not, was soon at an end; for Yanshen returned from the Palace, much earlier than usual, and conveyed me forth with to the Burman Jail. Words cannot express my sorrow on discovering Dr. Sandford had arrived there before me; for I fully

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attributed my removal to my folly in incurring the resentment of His Majesty; although the Doctor had himself reasons to expect similar punishment, if matters turned out unfavorable to the Army. Our second visit was attended with evils comparatively trifling. An extra pair of chains were first fastened on our Legs; and we were then lodged in an outer cell, where we had fresh air and were under no fear of infectious complaints: we were allowed to bring with us our mats and pillows. We were likewise told our meals should be brought regularly twice a day: and we were by no means displeased in observing we were not exactly within the jurisdiction of the "old man" and his dependants.

During the few moments of respiration in open air allowed to the ghastly tenants of the Dungeon, it was more painful than ever to witness the shocking state of our old companions. The Doctor's servants, whom we had left in tolerable good health and condition, were now become the emblems of starvation and wretchedness. They had been ten days without any food, but what they could beg from their fellow-prisoners. We had nothing more than tears of sympathy for their hard fate to bestow—for our own food had not arrived. They were soon plunged into the 'dread receptacle;' and the clank and clatter of hundreds of chains having ceased, a kind of a solemn tranquillity en-

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sued, that heightended the dreadful feelings which were newly awakened. Objects of despair one moment filled our senses; and, in the next reigned a stillness scarcely undisturbed by man:—all were quiet and unheard within the heavy bolts:—above, the heavens vied in serenity, with the inactivity existing below: all, all were motionless, save the restless spirits of the unfortunate.

Poor MacGregor survived only a few days after I left him—his malady rapidly increased—he died unrelieved by the hands of charity, enduring to the last the lash of his cruel oppressors.

About 5 o'clock I received my first meal. As I had often remarked before, in times the most afflicting and precarious, I found my appetite particularly keen, in proportion, as it were to my apprehension of want. We had been habituated to wash our food with the tears of grief and suspense. On this occasion I had but little sent me. A small portion of rice and the white of a couple of eggs, which I had purchased myself, composed my sustenance this day. The Shark's niggardliness excited no astonishment. The non-arrival of any thing for the Doctor, who was assured by Mr. Price that, as long as it were in his power, he should not only have a plentiful supply for himself, but for me also, was a circumstance which we considered a fore-runner of

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many dire calamities, not to overwhelm us with sorrow and disappointment. The poor Doctor's heart was also most affectingly touched at the deplorable sight of his two domestics with so little prospect of being able to relieve them. Tears of pity for a long time bedewed his face; and it was with difficulty I could persuade him to participate in what had been brought for me. At dusk we laid down on our mats filled with gloomy suspicions as to the events of the morrow. We had scarce began to dose when we were roused by the voice if Moung Yanshen, who came so unexpectedly at this hour to take Dr. S. to the office of the Minister of the Interior. In a few minutes after some one came for the Doctor's bedding; and informed me, for my consolation, that I was to return to the house of Moung Yanshen's family in the morning.

27th.—It was not however till nearly 5 o'clock, P. M. that my hopes were fulfilled, I was greeted by Moung Yanshen and his family with many symptoms of hospitality, from which I could only infer that peace was at last being settled. I learnt also that Dr. S. had been taken out of prison for the purpose of conveying a Letter to the British Camp, in company with Mr. Price, on his Parole. Having the last Tickal given me by Moung Byouck, still in my possession, my first object was to purchase some food for the two starving Servants we

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had left in jail. Owing to the inquisitive impertinence of those around me, I had the misfortune to lose about half the money, *through the Bamboo floor, in dividing it with a hammered chisel.* With the remainder I purchased some rice at a most exorbitant rate ; and so far prevailed on the extortionate Shark as to allow me to take it to the Prison myself, a very essential point. I was much gratified on finding a few days afterwards this act of mine reached the ears of government, and was the occasion of our poor Servants not being totally unheeded.

28*th Jan.*—Early this morning, I received a Tickal, sent me by Moung Byouck. Some days afterwards I learnt that five Tickals were the amount of the present, and on accusing the Shark of duplicity, he denied the fact of cheating me, alleging in his defence my ignorance of Burman coin. Time now passed most heavily with me : I ceased to survey with any degree of interest or curiosity, the surrrounding objects ; and I entirely gave up my zeal in learning the Burman characters. Indeed the task had become by far too difficult ; and by reason of my continual anxiety, it afforded little or no amusement. Another thing, I was actually afraid of making too great progress in the Language, seeing the compulsory way in which the Missionaries were sent about the country on account of their proficiency. Every day I became more disgusted with the natives : in-

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stead of esteeming them, as I used to do, a simple and inoffensive race, I now regarded them as vindictive, cruel, and pusillanimous. My sentiments, of course, were biassed by my disagreeable situation. I derived my greatest consolation from perusing the sacred scriptures, which Mr. Price had kindly given me a few days ago. Bitter indeed were my reflexions, and never shall I forget those sad moments ; but as a soldier of fortune, I shall remember that fortitude and peace of mind are required in such awful extremities.

5th Feb.—As I was eating a very sorry dinner, this afternoon, one of the Shark's family informed me of Dr. Sandford's return to the capital, making signs, by joining his two fore-fingers together, that the English and Burmahs were brothers,(or Too-doo-beh, the same.) I had been so often disappointed and deceived by the news I gained in a desultory way, that I scarce felt myself elated by this communication, not even by the Shark's congratulatory shake of the head, with an attempt, something like Bennecker, to call me by my name. The night passed, and I heard nothing to raise my hopes of a speedy release.

6th Feb.—I eagerly watched the return of Moung Yanshen from the Palace, for it was his duty to repair thither every morning. I did not venture to ask him any questions, as he showed no joyful symptoms in his counte-

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nance; consequently my chagrin was the less, when he explained to me, after eating his breakfast, by opposing the tips of his two fore-fingers, that the War still continued. My dinner this day was unusually scanty and coarse, and on my complaining, I got no other satisfaction than a sneer from one of the sons, accompanied with a remark, that the English and Burmahs were not friends.

9th Feb.—This day I was gratified with a visit from Dr. Sandford, Mr. Price and John; the attendance of the latter prevented me from gaining much intelligence or news concerning our army. Mr. Price, at this time, was just rising into repute and favor with the Government; in fact, he had become its prime political agent in all negociations between the hostile powers. Still they treated him alike singularly and ungenerously; neither his comfort nor necessaries of life, were ever consulted. To a person of his shattered constitution, the sufferings he endured when exposed night and day without covering during the several trips he made to the British camp, must have been excessive. The result of Dr. Sandford's communication with Sir A. Campbell would have been highly beneficial to the Burmahs had they chosen to take advantage of it. The British General conceded, that the army should not advance beyond a certain point (Pagham), before the 12th instant; intimating, at the same time,

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that opposition would of course be repelled: thereby allowing ample time for references to be made to the Court. The astonishment excited in the capital by the re-appearance of the Doctor is inconceivable. The Ministers themselves declared they never expected to see him again; and crowds of the Inhabitants flocked about him to have a view of such a paragon of honor, exclaiming "what a man of his word." Notwithstanding their admiration of good faith, the battle of Pagahm was fought at their instigation previous to the conclusion of the supposed suspension of hostilities. Ere this, it was generally supposed another action would be risked before the King would consent to the terms of peace.

In my intercourse with the Burman Chiefs, they appeared to me to be far more addicted to theory than superstition. At this period it was universally argued, that having already lost so many battles, it was the more probable in the next they would be successful. At another time, I remember, one of the Chieftains compared Sir A. Campbell to a cat, and themselves to a mouse; and, in allusion to the advance of the Arracan Army, he asked what they would do when they had two cats to play with them. The period of a New Moon was considered the most propitious for an attack upon the British.

12*th Feb.*—While eating a simple break-

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fast of rice and Peh-thees, (a vegetable similar to french Bean) I was not at all displeased at being interrupted with an order to attend at the secret council. I anticipated some good news from the little attentions I instantly received from those around me. In the course of an hour all the Woneghees and Attenwoons then residing in Ava were assembled. They pretended to receive Dr. Sandford and myself with many demonstrations of friendship, some of which, I have no doubt were sincere, others merely political. After sitting down beside them, agreeably to their directions, it was announced with much formality, that His Majesty, at last had positively come to a determination to make peace with the English, and had just issued orders for the Missionaries, the Doctor, and myself to be brought together for the purpose of consulting how this end could be best effected. I believe the news of their defeat at Pagahm-Mew (Mew signifies town or place) had only arrived this morning. The utmost consternation pervaded all classes; and it was rumoured there never had been so disastrous a battle fought before : there was also a great secret connected with the event, which was the fall of the General who commanded, Zayarthouan. Not a moment was now to be lost in bringing matters to a satisfactory conclusion, for it had become impossible to muster another force, so entirey had the Army, about 30,000,

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dispersed either from panic or discontent. It was truly laughable for me to discover, on my return, that only a small portion of our troops had been engaged, and that our loss consisted of one Private killed on the Field, and another who died of his wounds the following day. It is worthy of remark, on the supposition that Zayarthouan had been killed, his countrymen had no other encomiums to bestow on their fallen hero, than calling him a fool for exposing himself. It may therefore be the more readily credited, that it is not " the Burmah custom" for Commanders to lead on their Troops in battle. The deliberations of the Cabinet this day, provided I am fortunate in detailing them with due conciseness, will strikingly evince what little claim the Burmahs have to rank high in the scale of Nations. My observation was first attracted by seeing a Parchment, containing the Terms of Peace, which had been duly signed by the British Commissioners, lying on the floor, and not at all regarded as a Document of importance, it being soiled and rumpled by individuals who chose to read it. An infinity of questions were put to the Doctor and myself relative to the Payment of the Money, and on several points in the different articles which they did not comprehend. Prince Mane-za-ghee, and several others entertained great doubts as to the propriety of restoring all the Prisoners and paying the whole of

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the first instalment, without first receiving some proof of our sincerity. Mr. Price now represented that Sir A. Campbell was fully determined not to admit of the slightest mitigation in the Terms, more particularly those pertaining to the Prisoners and the Money. The matter was then referred to Dr. Sandford and myself. We smiled at being thus consulted; and observed that our ideas on the subject would not have any weight with them: upon which Mr. Price assured us that, Peace having been firmly resolved on, our opinions were eagerly requested and sought for. They compared our remarks with those of the Missionaries and John; and then, drew their own conclusions. The Ministers now acknowledged to us their ignorance of European customs, and pleaded the contrariety of those customs with their own and the nations with which they had hitherto been connected, as an excuse for their want of faith in the sincerity of our proposals. They could not believe that the "Cat with the Mouse in her Paws would refrain from destroying it;" and thought we were merely endeavouring to secure as much of their Gold as we could by fair means, and then to seize and plunder their capital.

To appease their doubts, we told them that after the many proofs they had witnessed, they could no longer question the honor of the British, reminding them at the same

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time of the Doctor's (signal) return: moreover, we stated, that as they actually possessed the form of a Treaty of Peace, duly signed and stamped, a violation of that Treaty on our part would be attended with consequences injurious to our interest, both in a political and commercial point of view, all over the world. Three or four hours elapsed in argument before it was unanimously resolved to send down some of the Prisoners, amongst whom were included Dr. Sandford and myself, together with Silver to the amount of Six Lacs (Burman) of Rupees, which was not more than one-third of the required instalment. The terms of Peace were also to be signed and transmitted. In vain did Mr. Judson and Mr. Price urge the inutility of such a proceeding, for it fell far short of the strict injunctions laid down in a Letter written by Mr. Robertson, one of the Commissioners, in answer to some communication previously made to him by Mr. Price. Our next argument was concerning the mode of signing the Treaty. The difficulty originated in the circumstance, that *according to the custom of their Country*, neither the King nor his nobles, ever made use of a sign manual; the royal word, in particular, being invariably esteemed sacred and sufficient in matters of the greatest moment. However, we signified to them that our custom widely differed, and that we deemed it highly essential

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for this point to be complied with. Accordingly the names of the four principal Ministers were inserted in the Treaty by the Wane-dowks. The Ministers themselves merely passed their hands over their respective names; and Dr. S. and myself were desired to take notice while they were doing so. The senior nobleman made a speech, which was translated to us at the instant, of the following effect:—"I sign this in sincerity and truth, trusting that peace may be permanently established, and likewise pitying the immense population on both sides." This form, however, was hereafter laid aside, and one with other ceremonies substituted. No point now remained but obtaining the sanction of the King to the resolutions of the Assembly, and on his Majesty they immediately waited. The palace was close by, and no farther ceremony was required than slipping over their other clothes a wide white Muslin Gown similar to a Bishop's. This added much to the dignity of the wearer; and had certainly a very chaste and becoming appearance. As yet none of us ventured to raise our spirits with confidence, knowing too well the fickleness of the Burman character. Our suspense, on this occasion, was heightened beyond conception by the Ministers not returning from the Palace for a space of two hours; and our joy rose in proportion when the approval of the King was announced. Notwithstanding the unnecessary tardiness displayed

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the whole morning, it being now about 3 o'clock P. M, the prisoners were to be collected and sent off with all possible despatch. Five minutes had scarce elapsed, since the Minister returned, when a Messenger came direct from the Palace, with an order from the King that, "Seek-keh Bennett was not to go." Seek-keh I believe to be synonymous with the title of officer in our own language; and it was the one by which I was usually addressed by the higher orders. The sudden change in his Majesty's determination gave rise to much serious discussion. Much altercation took place before we were finally dismissed from the council: and at one time the whole of the day's business was cancelled. At length the Doctor, his two Servants, together with Mr. Price at the head of the deputation, had orders to embark in the Boats forthwith. "Good bye, my dear S." said I, "Heaven only knows why I am not allowed to accompany you; perhaps the King has a pique against me owing to my ungracious Shee-kōh." To ameliorate my disappointment they removed me to Mr. Price's house, in room of the Doctor, and ordered that I should not be troubled in future with chains. They consoled me also with the prospect of being sent down with the remainder of the first instalment should Mr. Price meet with a favorable reception from the British.

13th, 14th, and 15th—Anxiety and sus-

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pense, my never-wearying accompaniments, continued seriously to oppress my spirits. Meimbiah, who was Doctor Sandford's late surety, and John, together with the relatives of Mr. Price, all paid me the most hospitable attentions : still, every thing I observed filled me with apprehension and alarm. As yet our Army had not advanced beyond Pagahm, a town upwards of one hundred miles from Ava, but its gradual approach began to occasion the utmost dread and consternation. Already it was most apparent that, at least, one half of the inhabitants had left the Capital, taking with them the whole of their furniture. Orders were in consequence issued that no Carts nor Bundles should pass the Gates without a written sanction to that effect from the proper authorities. Some persons however, escaped with their Baggage either into the Jungle or into their Boats; Those in the employment of the Government were necessitated to be doubly cautious in the disposal of their Property; Many had recourse to subterranean caverns, in the excavation of which the Burmahs are particularly expert, deriving their principal means of strengthening them from their never-failing resource, the Bamboo Jungle. The exaggerated reports that arrived every instant increased the general alarm. It turned out that the hopes of the nation depended on the exertions of Zayarthouan and the total discomfiture of that

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Chieftain at the Battle of Pagahm operated upon the minds of every one accordingly.

Z. had been recently appointed General-in chief of the Burman Forces, although, at the time, he had merely attained the rank of Wane-dowk, or Assistant to a Wane-ghee; and had never been known as a military character. He owed his sudden elevation to his boasting effrontery in a conference with the King, to whom he declared that none of the former Generals had displayed the slightest courage, talents or energy in opposing the Invaders; stating, in the same breath, that, if His Majesty would give him the command of the Army, the British should soon be turned out of the Country. To the universal surprise of those present, the King listened to the delusive promises of this upstart warrior; who was not only to preserve the tottering fabric of his Sovereigns throne but to drive the Enemy into the Sea. The Kyee-wane-ghee, and several other Generals, were superseded, in order that every thing connected with the Army should be left to Zayarthouan's controul, who throughout the War had rendered himself conspicuous by his inveteracy against the British. Had it not been for his bombastic persuasions, there is little doubt that His Majesty would have acknowledged our triumph by acceding to the proposed terms during the conferences at Malown. This is the more probable from the cir-

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cumstance that six Lacs of Rupees were actually sent to Malown as an earnest of the first instalment : and it was a serious loss to the Burmahs, who regard Gold and Silver more than their Deities, to sacrifice the greatest part of this money, in consequence of their precipitate flight, when that place was taken. Mr. Judson had accurate knowledge that not more than one Lac was secured, the rest either falling into the hands of the British or Burmah Soldiery. The chances of war still remained unfavourable ; and Zayarthouan proved to be no greater favorite of the fickle Goddess than any of his predecessors. He displayed no military talents whatever ; but exhibited a degree of ferocity and barbarity towards his own Soldiers, seldom equalled by tyrants of any age. The consequence was, as may be supposed, the overthrow of the Army by the easy-fought battle of Pagahm, after which, I firmly believe, no further attempts were ever made either to rally, or form a body at all, on the part of the Burmahs, so general was the panic, and the disgust with their own Leaders. No one could give the least account of what had become of Zayarthouan, and it was generally supposed he had been slain on the field.

It is impossible to describe the excessive consternation existing in the capital : although it was universally known that Mr. Price had left Ava with a cargo of Money and a portion

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of the prisoners, still the people could not persuade themselves to remain quiet.

I, myself, making every allowance for their ignorance, and want of faith, was not a little alarmed at hearing the Cannon rattling through the streets; and seeing the inhabitants secrete, or carry away, their goods and chattels; still more so when I heard the King was equally as suspicious as his subjects, and that long files of Carts laden with valuables from the Palace, were daily departing.

About 9 o'clock on the morning of the 14th, I heard a most extraordinary noise in the street. Being in a compound surrounded with buildings, I could not discover the cause, which I learnt in the course of an hour afterwards from Mr. Judson who was a spectator. It appears that Zayarthouan had just found his way to the Palace, and with the utmost audacity had forced himself without leave or license into the presence of his Majesty. He had no sooner uttered the words "Oh Prah! Prah! (Sire) give me one more thousand men, and I'll beat the British," than the incensed and exasperated Monarch, with eyes flashing fury and indignation, gave the significant sign to his attendants, which pronounce the doom of this would be hero.

Seldom or never were the mandates of despotic sway more rigorously carried into execution. Z. had been long infamous for his savage

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disposition, and his conduct of late had been signalised by a series of the most unprovoked and atrocious cruelties. The Soldiers had groaned under his tyranny, and hundreds of them had been sacrificed for trifling misdemeanors. Cowardice he punished by chopping off their thighs. It was a delight to those entrusted with his execution, at the head of whom was Moung-Yanshen, to render his death as excruciating, and at the same time as tedious, as possible. No one felt the least pity when Zayarthouan was dragged out of Palace by the hair of his head, and from thence kicked and speared down to the Jail: to walk was an indulgence too great to be allowed; they pushed him on pulling his hair, arms, and legs, alternately, together with the torment of lances being occasionally thurst into his body. At the jail Mr. Judson beheld him in this situation. After remaining there a few minutes Zayarthouan was conducted to the place of execution in a similar manner, a few moments cessation being granted at different periods, lest nature should be overpowered before the mob had in some degree wreaked its vengeance. Thus was this object of detestation conveyed a distance of a mile and a half, occupying no less time than two hours. At the instant of decapitation scarce a breath remained; and his body was covered with kicks from horses, and wounds innumerable. Each day, since the Doctor's departure, became more and more

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terrifying. I really thought it was all deceit in regard to the Signature of the Treaty of Peace. All John's friends came to tell him that the people were flying in all directions; and that the Cannon were being planted on the river side, and also taken to a newly erected Stockade outside the walls, with all possible expedition. It was evident but few persons now remained in the service of the Government, from the slow movements of the heavy Artillery. By John I was told, that even the women and children laughed at the idea of making any further resistance; and one little boy in the house remarked "that they were taking the guns down, one by one, and then asked who were to fire them." The irrecoverable defeat of the Troops was now well known, and another thing, every one knew of the unserviceable state of the artillery from long disuse and neglect. Most of the guns were long 12 and 18 pounders, taken from the Portuguese.

Matters on the 15th wore a more serious aspect than ever; all the women were ordered to fly to some retreat up the river; Meimbiah now made no secret of sending all his property away: and the Queen with her Suite were expected to start immediately for a place called Mowk-so-boh, a Fort above 30 Tine North of Ava, and the birth-place of Alompra. In the evening, Meimbiah's elephant was

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brought into the compound to be ready at a moment's notice; besides it had become imprudent to trust it out of his sight while things were in such anarchy. Meimbiah was as good natured a little fellow as I conceive it possible for a Burmah to be. He told me to eat and drink as much as I could, and plentifully supplied John and me with some excellent Arrack. The Burmah nation, he said, was like all others, and therefore I must not be surprised to find some bad characters in it. In the evening he asked me into his own house, where he endeavoured to persuade me to remain in his country and take the command of 500 men. He thought I must be a capital Soldier, as my King gave me so many Rupees per month; but expressed his astonishment of my ignorance of other professions, and would hardly believe I had not been brought up for a Tailor as well as a Soldier. He embraced several avocations himself, two of which were "Keeper of the Wardrobe" and "Master of the Hounds:" or to use John's words he was the "Dog Minister" and the "Tailor Minister." Having a number of Madrassees in his employ, making Dresses for the Dancing Girls, perhaps he thought I should be admirably calculated to command that department. The opinions of the King's Interpreter having materially influenced the politics of the Court during the late war, an outline of his peculiarities may probably be interesting. To

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me he proved a most entertaining companion, being full of information and anecdote. Although, I have no doubt, much untruth was blended in every thing he said, still a great deal, on certain subjects, inclined me to pay some attention to his conversation. According to his own account, his father was a Frenchman, and his mother a native of Bengal. The former acquired considerable affluence as a Goldsmith and Jeweller both in India Proper and Burmah, and when he died, left each of his children fifteen thousand Rupees. John having uncommon abilities, got employed in several public Offices in Bengal, receiving a salary of 180 Rupees per month. His disposition, however, turned out too volatile to brook dependence upon any one; so, after marrying, and quarrelling with all his Brothers and Sisters, he then launched into the wide world to seek his fortune, by adopting his father's profession. He had made himself acquainted with most of the Countries and Languages of the East: and of late years had resided in Ava. Having a smart and good person, and possessing infinite skill in spinning gold and silver thread and making all kinds of nicknacs, he soon attracted the notice of their Burman Majesties. At the present period, John was evidently quite at a loss and in excessive alarm. From his talents as a Linguist, his conversant knowledge

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of Eastern politics in general, together with other engaging and amusing qualities, John had become the prime favorite and interpreter of the King, whom, says he, "I look upon as my sweetheart;" and, declaring that, like a faithful lover, he was ready to die in his service. He asked me, at the same time, if such would not be my sentiments if my affections were put to such a test. He added also, that the "King too is very fond of me." The highest deference was always paid to John's arguments at the Lotoo or other public offices, in consequence of the privileges he enjoyed, and his natural abilities. The Ministers of State, regarding him as a spy upon their actions, were exceedingly jealous of John's influence at Court; for he had permission to enter the palace at all times; where, he assured me, his Majesty frequently laid aside his regal dignity, and amused himself with cooking all kinds of choice dishes, spinning gold, &c. In the eventful month of February, it is no wonder, that the spy, who had rendered himself odious to all classes, should feel himself alone in a kingdom, labouring under a load of national and domestic calamities. Notwithstanding his boasted intimacy with the King, he remarked (I do not remember his precise words), that, in such cases, he considered it the best for him to remain silent and quiet at home, ready in an instant to obey his Majesty's summons, rather than obtrusively to anticipate them. He was philosopher enough

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to know that the mind of man, even under ordinary afflictions, is often irritable and uncertain; but when assailed by the most heavy misfortunes too frequently seeks relief by following the advice of desperate rather than wise persons. After spending three days with John, I could easily perceive he felt piqued that his presence at the Palace had not been required. However, we heard from Meimbiah, that his Majesty had made enquiries concerning us; and it was not to be supposed he felt at all inclined to resume his wonted occupations with his favorite, the soul of the Monarch was by far too ill at ease—rest was banished by the uneasiness of his crown, like a Prince of our own land it may be presumed he often exclaimed amid his troubles, "How many thousands of my poorest subjects are at this hour asleep? sleep! sleep! &c." The Interpreter was often-times very ardent in promoting matters of reconciliation: one thing, he had no chance of leaving the Capital, if he wished it, till the conclusion of the War. Among other happy similes, he observed one day that the "Burmah Nation is like a great fishing-net, in which it was very easy to enter but very difficult to get out." I remember at my first visit to Moung Byouck's office, he told the Minister, that if the English knew the exact treatment Dr. Sandford and I had received, they would be exasperated beyond measure; and probably not

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make peace with them at all. This, and other judicious expressions, had their due effect: and inclined me to think favorably of John's character. His never-ending conversation, for which he possessed more than ordinary talents, and capacity, displayed in full, those principles by which his life and actions had been governed. From his communications, and the experience of others, I must allow he was an unprincipled and abandoned person—a kind of butterfly political being; often read of in oriental tales. His knowledge of the English tongue was superior to any foreigner's I ever heard. Suspicion and dissimulation were his two most characteristic traits. Often did he exclaim, when he fancied intrigues were on foot against him, "What do I care for the Ministers, and what care they for me—a set of humbugging, lying, rascals: I say (I say spoken with much emphasis) the King is my sweetheart, and if my head goes off to-morrow I can't help it—I'll serve him till I die." At other times he would conclude a long Philippic, against the real or supposed machinations of the Ministers, by saying;—"Never mind, we shall see, God is great." I never gave my friend John much great for temperance either in eating or drinking. Others, better acquainted with him, assert, that my head would not have been safe had it stood in his way of a Bottle of Brandy. He generally wore the dress of

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a Mussulman, because it pleased the fancy of the King ; who also announced his pleasure in regard to the shape of John's Mustachios. My dedicating so many lines to an account of this man may appear eccentric, were it not for his peculiar notoriety. He is the more impressed on my memory, being the only person with whom I ever had an uninterrupted conversation with during my Captivity in the Capital. He paid me also many assiduous and hospitable attentions; hence I could not but agree with his enthusiastic encomiums on the mild and virtuous qualities of the King; and his lamentations of course that his Majesty was merely, as he called him, "The Doll of the Nation," and "The tool of the Government." With regard to the conduct of the Ministers John appeared to contradict himself. One time he stated the King was kept ignorant of all the particulars of the War ; and that the nobles possessed an aristocratical power that made them conscious, of the inefficacy of the Laws, without their authority to enforce them. On another day, John declared, that every morning since the capture of Donabew, all the Ministers, and public Officers, presented themselves at the Palace at 8 o'clock, whether their attendance was actually necessary or not. There they received their orders for the day, and reported all the events of the preceding one. I believe this latter account to have been the case, for Moung Yanshen visited the

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Palace every morning, always dressed in his best apparel. However, both of John's remarks are compatible with each other to a great degree. In illustration of this I will record what I verily believe took place at the palace the very morning the news of the defeat at Pagahm reached His Majesty. The King at that time was not fully aware of the near approach of the British towards his Capital: and as the period had now arrived when it was absolutely essential he should know the exact situation of affairs, one of the Ministers, in the most prostrate attitude, informed him of the true state of the case, expatiating on the contumacious adherence of the Invaders to their hard conditions of Peace; which had only been read to his Majesty a few days before. His Majesty expressed great indignation at not having ere now a faithful detail of every circumstance, in order that he might have the Strangers satisfied, without his capital being endangered. The smooth-tongued Minister, a true representative of the whole body, then burst out—"Oh Prah! Prah! we were afraid to give such dreadful intelligence to your Majesty." I agree with John in thinking the real fact of the case consisted in the Ministers purposely allowing matters to come to such a crisis, that no other tangible resource should remain but the Royal treasury, from which the pecuniary demands could be defrayed.

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On the evening of the 15th my suspense is not to be imagined owing to Mr. Price not returning from his Mission. My opinion of the propable cause of the delay was frequently asked by Meimbiah for the information of the King. After listening to many dismal stories on the cruel and barbarous customs of the Burmahs I endeavoured to sleep ; and I passed the night as restless and gloomy as I had done any previous one. The whole place resounded too with the howlings of the parriar dogs now left starving by the families who had fled into the jungle.

My description tho' imperfect, I trust will enable my reader to form some idea of the state of the Capital. The Inhabitants of Rome after the battle of Cannæ, or those of Paris when invested by the Allies could not have been more terrified. My humble picture may likewise shew the wisdom of the forbearance, exercised on our part, towards the Burmahs, in not exacting from them at once, a great and onerous cash payment and in not pressing on too speedily towards their capital; but allowing them time to digest our terms, and consider the British character in all its bearings from the evidence before them : that we had been and still were in the steady pursuit of one object, from which we were not to be diverted by their wheedling and chicanery. Had we moved directly on to the capital from Prome,

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as there is no doubt we might quite easily have done; and not taken the pains we did to convince them that we did not wish for the dismemberment of their empire; they most certainly would never have made peace of themselves; but, purely from misunderstanding our motives, they would have gone on resisting or flying, as we advanced, till the capital, and the empire, had fallen, in one common ruin, and another Province been added to the British Dominions in the East: some lucky circumstances tended to avert this alternative, and made the threatened capital a fulcrum, on which was laid the lever, that moved the ruling powers to our purpose. Individuals, said a noble philosopher, often disagree and quarrel, merely from not understanding each other perfectly; and the same thing may be supposed possible between nations. The contrast is great between our customs and those of the Burmahs; and till the late war, few opportunities occurred to allow of these different customs being reciprocally understood.

16*th Feb.*—My joy on being informed by John, about 8 o'clock this morning, that Mr. Price had returned, and that "all news is good news" may easily be imagined. Sir A. Campbell however had not given way in the slightest degree to the solicitations of the Ministers. The Six Lacs of Rupees which accompanied the Mission were to their astonishment returned un-

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touched; and they were again assured by the Commissioners that the terms of the proposed Treaty must be scrupulously complied with. Mr. Price had scarce closed his eyes since the 12th, so great was his anxiety, and so little the attention paid either to his comfort or convenience. Exposed night and day in an open Boat, his sufferings may be more easily conjectured than described: and I am sure nothing manifests more the selfish and inconsiderate spirit of the Burmahs in thus treating one, who avowed himself, and acted as their staunch friend. Far be it from any one to comment harshly on that gentleman's conduct, without being aware of his singular circumstances. Having married a native, Mr Price had formed intimate connexions in the Country, and his actions were peculiarly biassed. If he entertained motives of an interested nature, his persevering efforts surely deserved to be crowned with success for he sought not for the protection and favour of the British, although they were open to him but he frankly owned his true character to our Commissioners, declaring it should be his endeavour to make the best bargain he could for the Burmahs, whom he regarded as in capable of doing any thing at this period as it ought to be done. He did not swerve from the cause he had adopted, but enthusiastically doubled his exertions on witnessing the distress prevalent in the Country. His heart, as he told

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me, yearned towards relieving it: neither did the hardships of a long and rigorous imprisonment excite any vindictive principles against his enemies. He certainly is not a man of mean capacity which some, from his forlorn appearance, may fancy; and he certainly deserves credit for his conduct as the Burman diplomatic Agent. Upon his return from Pagahm, although nearly exhausted to death, he immediately acquainted the Ministers with every particular of his Mission: after being unnecessarily detained by them for several hours, he was permitted to retire to his own house, where it was most affecting to witness the happiness of his wife and children, on seeing him. A moment's repose was still denied to him, Meimbiah and others came to gratify their curiosity regarding the British Camp. Half an hour had scarce elapsed ere orders arrived from Mr. Price to return to the Palace, with John and myself. With a heart full of pleasing anticipations I readily attended the summons; and ascended with much alacrity a steep flight of steps to a private entrance of the Palace. In a short time I found myself within a spacious chamber of lofty and splendid dimension. The pillars, wainscotings, &c. were all most richly carved and gilded; but it did not contain a single article of furniture except what appeared an old bedstead studded with coloured glass, upon

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which, I imagine, His Majesty is seated at the ordinary Councils. Some bricks were lying at the foot of some of the golden Pillars; and another curious fact was there being a number of little holes cut in the floor about 8 or 10 feet from each other for the convenience of spitting through. At the upper end, were all the Grandees sitting on the bare floor; and in such earnest consultation that they required neither Mats nor any other floor cloth being spread for their accommodation. When at Moung Byouck's office I had often fancied myself behind the scenes of the Burmah political Stage, here, with justice, I fancied myself honored with an admittance into the green room, where stood the Managers and Dramatis personæ perfectly natural and undisguised, but I cannot add equally unembarrassed. Mane-za-ghee as usual was the leading person. His Highness discoursed with Mr. Price without ever consulting any of his Brother Ministers, although merely a junior Attenwoon himself. The rest appeared perfectly submissive and quite content to join in all his plans. My name I heard introduced occasionally. From the manner and tone of Mr. Price's replies it struck me that Mane-za-ghee was inventing all kinds of shifts and stratagems to avoid forwarding the required instalment: however he was assured that the Commissioners were not to be deluded and put off any longer,

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and Mr. Price declared also that he dare not approach Sir Archibald again without the terms of the treaty were fulfilled. During this conference I remained a silent spectator, and was not troubled with a single question. They left me to reflect on their dishonorable and deceitful proceedings: not a sentiment of honor or patriotism could I discover; nothing seemed to concern them but the mortification of parting with a few lacs of Rupees. Mr. Judson, who was present, and I, rejoiced most heartily in observing long files of the natives pass through the chamber conveying treasure to the river side; for we knew it to be most heart-breaking to our tyrannical oppressors. A Burmah of quality measures his happiness in proportion to his accumulation of gold and silver; which must be treasured in the earth, without any being wasted in embellishing the mind or the person. After two hours deliberation, the Ministers withdrew for the purpose of obtaining the sanction of His Majesty to what they had then resolved on. In the mean time I remained about the chamber with Mr. Price and John. The former took the opportunity of collecting a brick or two to form a pillow, and if possible, to gain a little sleep. When Mr. Price had been similarly situated in the early part of the morning, on the return of the Ministers, who supposed him asleep, he overheard a part of their conversation. One en-

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quired if it were really a fact that the Royal Family were unable to pay down the requisite sum, being under the impression that most of the treasure had been sent away: the other replied it was no such thing, but their object was to procrastinate the payment, in order that it might be partly collected from the people.

I regretted much in not being at liberty to ramble over these splendid buildings, where all the riches of the Empire are thought to be concentrated. Never having but one and the same view of the Palace, I can scarce form an idea of its shape or extent. From Mr. Price's description I learnt it is comprised of 120 different chambers, most of them having a distinct roof in the style of the priests' houses. The same elegant and curious workmanship is displayed throughout the whole, but not equally gilded, which depends upon the degree of splendour required. The most striking and magnificent part of the edifice is the grand entrance together with the Piadthad, which appears immediately above it. This latter building surmounts the throne, and, to say the least of it, it reflects the highest credit on Burman architecture. I am at a loss how to describe its singular construction. It seemed as if it were composed of seven roofs with 7 tiers of ornamental lodges all ascending one above the other each diminishing in proportion, from the top

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of these sprung a well modelled steeple of considerable height ; and the whole was crowned with a handsome brass Tee, or umbrella, similar to those on the tops of the Pagodas, The first view of the entrance and Piadthad at a few hundred yards distance is truly imposing. The proportion of the slender pillars of the one, and the high minareted appearance of the other strike with peculiar effect. All the front of the Palace is profusely covered with gilding. A wall, about ten feet high, runs along its front with a flight of steps at the right and left corners. At the base of the wall were planted all the best cannon His Majesty possessed. These, independently of their worm-eaten State, would have presented but little hindrance to our brave fellows when they beheld a golden castle in rear. Fine noble sheds were contiguous to the Palace in which were kept the Elephants, (I believe there are about a thousand of these animals in the capital distributed to the different noblemen according to their rank) Ponies, Carriages, &c. I was gratified this day with a view of the celebrated White Elephant. The colour of this creature appeared to me to partake of a dirty cream : its tusks were shortened and tipped with gold. Having merely a peep from the Palace I did not see the utensils in which the animal was fed : Mr. Price however, assured me, they were all made either of gold or of sil-

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ver. Amongst the Burmahs the White Elephant is regarded with a superstitious veneration, and supposed to be some Deity. His Majesty never allows himself the honor of riding it except on a very solemn State occasion. The most extraordinary circumstance is, that all the Officers in charge of the animal are named after the different Government Offices, that is to say, the beast has its Wone-ghee, Attenwoon, Wone-dowk, &c. &c. A female Elephant of the same description died in the capital at the commencement of the War, and, I believe, there is only the one to which I have alluded remaining in the dominions, at least in a tame state. Some imagine it to be diseased with the leprosy : but its well known aversion to Elephants of the usual colour partly proves this idea to be erroneous.

It was full two hours ere the Ministers returned from their audience with the King, during which time my astonishment may easily be conceived to observe a Messenger was despatched for the Maps of the Empire, in order, as John told me, that "King might see what countries he was about to lose." John had often remarked that money was a Burmah's God ; and here, it was pretty well proved that the thoughts of losing some precious gold weighed so heavily on the royal mind as to preclude the shame of ceding those territories that I had been made to state in my letter, he had

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sworn to transmit to his posterity without diminution. At such a crisis, I felt assured that any retraction would only be attended with heavier losses; so I waited without trembling the issue of the "Map Minister's" audience. At length I heard the welcome sound of a dismissal, and orders issued for all the prisoners in, or near, the capital to be collected and sent down forthwith. Twilight was fast approaching when we returned to Mr. Price's house, where I deemed every moment an hour till the final order arrived for us to repair to the Beach. I never shall forget my sensations in walking thither in company with Mr. Price, Meimbiah and John. They were again of a most undefinable nature, such as can only be experienced by those acquainted with such vicissitudes. The moonlight heavens beamed in still serenity, 'the busy hum of men' had long deserted the streets, an occasional howl from one of the forsaken dogs broke in only on the universal tranquillity; while pacing a tedious way, this silence infused a kind of solemn sensation, which, in spite of the more joyous emotions now kindling in my breast, I could not resist. Notwithstanding the vast desertion of the inhabitants, some authority and vigilance were still preserved, for to my surprise I found my legs, suddenly entangled in a rope, which was placed across the road for catching thieves, a watchman in his box hav-

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ing hold of one end of the cord. On our road we passed the house in which Mr. and Mrs. Judson were living, and I had the pleasure of seeing the latter for a few seconds, who congratulated me on my prospect of escape. Her own, at this period, she considered far from being certain, for much was to be dreaded from the ungovernable passions of the Burmahs, whenever they were touched in certain points of their dispositions. The ardour of my spirits was most effectually damped in leaving this unhappy lady in the hands of such a barbarous and merciless people. Considering the Burmahs, however, as half-savages; and the light in which they regard females of their own country, some little credit is due to them for their behaviour towards Mrs. Judson. She was kept free from every indignity and insult during Mr. Judson's imprisonment, in a house belonging to a person of great respectability. On my arrival at the beach, I found several of the Ministers assembled in a public building. It was now about 9 o'clock, and neither the prisoners, nor the money were ready. According to what I expected, I perceived a number of guns ranged on the sands between the walls and the edge of the river and other preparations for a siege were still going on. The Ministers during the delay spread out their mats and fell asleep. About 11 o'clock the boats were announced as being ready to depart, and in the course of a few minutes I was

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placed on the bow of a war-boat in company with Mr. Judson, with little or no room to stretch our legs and without any other comfort. Mr Judson had only just received orders to accompany the deputation : no instructions whatever were given him nor any communication made relative to the object of his mission. The Burmahs had an idea he would beseech Sir Archibald to make Peace for the cause of humanity ; and under the same impression, they once intended Mrs. Judson should visit the British Camp on her parole on a similar errand, and to effect which nothing but her indisposition prevented. Mr. Price on this occasion was dignified with thetitle of Ambassador. Two Ministers, one of whom was Moung Byouck, accompanied us ; and in their boats were hoisted the royal standard, namely a handsome white muslin flag with an ornament of cut glass on the top of the pole.

17*th*.—Our boats continued rowing till we reached the Head Quarters of the Burman Army about 20 miles from Ava. Mr. Price's assertion that the troops were nearly annihilated by fright and desertion, appeared very just. A few Boats, and a few straggling parties now comprised the once-countless host. There were too few objects to create confusion, although the utmost consternation prevailed. Horsemen were flying in all directions, bringing in every exaggerated report they could gather : the re-

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port of a gun, which must have been fired by one of their own marauders, for the British were at least 70 miles off, roused the timidity of the Ministers instantaneously. They immediately dispatched emissaries to the Capital with the news that our Army was fast advancing ; and requesting the whole of the first instalment might be forwarded immediately, for, strange to say, only 12 Lacs instead of 18 were in the Boats. Nothing could exceed the ludicrous conduct of the Ministers towards Mr. Price and Mr. Judson. A thousand apologies were made to them for the cruel usage they had hitherto received ; and the most flattering assurances given of future friendship and protection. The servility of their fawnings and flatteries we found equally as disgusting as their insuperable haughtiness on other occasions. They had not the consideration to gain any of our good graces by sending us any food, which we much needed ; or inventing a shade from the Sun, to the beams of which we were about to be exposed for the whole day. Moung Byouck and his comrade declared they would venture no farther for the present, so the matter was again entrusted to Mr. Price. Two Wone-dowks accompanied us. but they were people of little or no consequence : they trembled at the idea of entering the British Camp ; and they also forgot to provide any thing in the shape of food beyond coarse rice and leaves. Mr. Judson however,

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was kind enough to share with me some bread and brandy.

The whole country between Ava and Pagahm presented one continued scene of desolation and distress. All the merciless effects of war attended the inoffensive peasantry ; and these calamities were aggravated, not only by the different bodies of maranders now infesting the Country, but also by those faithful adherents of Government who insisted they should flee ; and burnt their habitations. The Army, so recently dispersed, were moving in various directions in independent tribes, each collecting booty, or rather provisions for their own immediate wants. Indeed so extreme was the anarchy that existed, that Mr. Price, in returning from his last trip, nearly lost his life, having been attacked by one of these parties, who were not intimidated by the King's troops. Many of the poor natives, whom we beheld on shore, hailed our Boats with uplifted hands, entreating to be informed if any prospect of peace could be held out to them. Many villagers were literally dying of starvation ; and those more savage made no scruple in committing the most cruel and open robberies on each other. The unhappy helpless women, with infants in their arms, were, without remorse, plundered of their last remaining handful of rice, and left to perish on the banks of the river. We met with hundreds of families tracing their route to

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the Capital in their Boats: their flight, however, was urged by the most coercive and sanguinary operations: by far, the greater part of the population sought the protection of their apparent enemies, the English Army. In the afternoon, Mr. Judson and I, were highly diverted with the conversation between one of the Wonedowks and the Boatmen. They discussed the various events of the war, abusing themselves for the cruelties they had so often unnecessarily committed. The British honour and uprightness was the theme of their admiration; while they readily acknowledged their own treachery and want of faith. Mr. J., for whose ear these arguments were designed, was styled their deliverer, their guardian Angel, peace-maker, &c. At last such foolish and fulsome flattery became really annoying; for we well knew their praise flowed, not from an open integrity of heart, but from the base suspicious feeling they entertained of their personal safety when within the British power; and gladly would they have declined the honour of their duty had they dared.

About Gun-fire, A. M. the Burman War Boats were hailed by the British Tars in our Light Division of Gun-Boats, which, under the command of Lieutenant Smith, R. N. had advanced a few miles in front of the Main Body; thinking we had yet many miles to proceed, my joy was the more augmented in thus finding

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myself suddenly within the precincts of our own Army. The arrival of the Deputation being reported to Brigadier Armstrong, instructions were issued for Mr. Judson, Mr. Price, and myself to go on board the Steam Boat immediately, and the War Boats to be laid alongside. The welcome reception I experienced from the Brigadier will long be impressed on my memory: with all the warmth and ardour of friendship he received me in his private cabin; manifesting at once his earnest solicitude for my safety. Thus gratified with the congratulations of the gallant Colonel of my Regiment, and those of many of my Countrymen, my spirits, no doubt, would have been elevated beyond measure had not other circumstances conspired to damp their fervency. Contending emotions overwhelmed my mind; so much so, I scarce felt sensible of the happy termination of my captivity. I felt distressed for the unfortunate situation of some of my fellow-prisoners, particularly for Mrs. Judson, whom, but four and twenty hours before, I had left in all the agony of suspense. A few enquiries also made known to me the death of many esteemed companions; and, above all, the loss of my dearest friend in the Corps. Such sad news awaiting me, it need not be wondered my heart for a time was, filled with considerable gloom. Alas! my grief, however unavailing, is far from being transitory. Those who partook in

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this War, must have observed that the calamities attendant on it were, in many instances, peculiarly afflicting: We did not loose our intimates in the heat of battle, when possibly our own doom might be the next sealed, and when our feelings influenced by fortunate escapes, together perhaps with the joy of having added lustre to our reputation upheld us: no, we seldom saw them depart otherwise than decayed, like the cankered fruit, by some inward and obstinate disease; or, like the fallen blossom withering rapidly away from some malignant local cause. The young Cadet, full of glee at his wandering exploits, the zealous Soldier, rigid in the performance of his duties; the hardy Veteran, who compared the drudgery of the present scenes with the more interesting incidents of former services; equally fell a victim to the inclemency of the rainy Season; or, in the dry weather, to the baneful effects of a tropical Sun. And is not the remembrance of such melancholy casualties, a serious source for regret. I am persuaded feelings of this nature do exist in every generous bosom; and that our friends whose careers have been untimely closed, not exactly in the fields of glory, will be for ever sincerely lamented.

18*th Feb.*—This night I passed on the deck of the Diana Steam Boat; and, save a few nervous agitations, no sylvan bower watched by

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the Goddess herself, could have yielded more heartfelt satisfaction, than the society of the Officers, Jack Tars and Lascars, of the vessel, who were all huddled together on board. Early this morning, Mr. Judson, Mr. Price and myself, under the guidance of Captain Chads, the Commandant of the Royal Navy, went on shore, for the purpose of seeing Sir A. Campbell, whom we met, with the Bengal Division of Troops, pursuing his way to the capital. Sir Archibald appointed the Deputation to attend him about 10 o'clock at the close of the march, when he should be encamped on the banks of the river. We returned to the Steam Boat to Breakfast, after which, I was delivered over to the Commissioners in due form. In the mean time the Burmahs did not enjoy the gratification they expected. The General persisted in his intention of not retreating, nor halting, till the fulfilment of every Article of the Treaty; and held out the severest threats in case of any future ill-treatment to any of the prisoners. The War-boats with the 12 lacs of Tickals, were ordered to remain at a convenient distance; and it was signified that none of the Money would be received till the arrival of the proper instalment.

24th Feb.—The Army advanced three marches towards Ava after my return; and did not halt till it arrived at Yandaboh, a place

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of no note, hitherto, about 25 tine (or 50 miles) from the capital. It was here the Ministers, whom I had left at the Quarters of the Burman Forces, met our Commissioners, as the representatives of His Burman Majesty. They were invested with full powers for concluding the Treaty of Peace, the execution of which was done in a truly ludecrous style. Two old single-pole Tents were pitched for the accommodation of the Burman Ministers, whose fear and alarm made them forget their usual lofty ideas of etiquette, together with the pomp and pageantry they are so fond of displaying on any State occasion.

At 5 o'clock this afternoon, all preliminary matters having been definitively settled, Peace was announced by a feu-de-joie, and hailed with the most heartfelt delight by the whole Army. The Burman Ministers accompanied by Sir Archibald Campbell, and Staff, walked to the park of Artillery to witness the Salute. During the operation, as may easily be conceived, they expressed the utmost wonder on observing the rapidity, precision, and regularity, with which the Guns were managed. A few Rockets were also discharged for their amusement: the fuses from these were watched with intense interest, and a shout of glee uttered on their bursting; and were beheld, perhaps, with the same sensations as those excited by an ordinary display of fire-

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works. The heavy artillery were regarded with far different emotions, and on being taken very near to the Guns, their agitation appeared excessive. This was the view, probably, of our skilful and politic Commander, than whom, no one knew better the foibles of his antagonists. Their remarks of admiration were mingled with symptoms which betrayed more than astonishment. They fancied, in all probability, how the King, would have been terrified, had he heard the walls of his Palace battered, their actions towards those persons upon whose arms they leaned, evinced clearly that, however zealous they might have been in the cabinet for prolonging the war, they certainly had not been accustomed to participate in its more practical effects.

I paid a morning visit to my old friend Moung Byouck under his humble canopy. The poor fellow had lost his activity and facetiousness; he seemed to feel most painfully his then humiliated situation; and begged of me to exert my influence towards ensuring a Peace, and not to prejudice the English Commander. I, on my part, made him promise to release an unfortunate young captive whom I knew still remained confined in the Dungeon. How are the mighty fallen! I thought, as I stepped out of the Tent. He, now so crest-fallen, I had lately beheld filled with consequential ideas;

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and, in the midst of the repeated misfortunes of his country, flattering himself that his own talents, together with the chances of war, would eventually turn the scale. Moung Byouck I believe to be a faithful and deserving Minister, and had profited much by his talents during the war. As an Attenwoon he stands high in favor with his Majesty, and is popular with all classes; moreover, he is one of the few who has the sense to perceive the narrow views of his own Government, with respect to its ideas of commerce, and connexion with other States. From his very dark complexion, he was frequently called the 'Black Minister,' under which colour however, lies a heart more susceptible of kindness and sympathy than those of the generality of his brother Ministers. I shall ever remember, with respect and gratitude, a number of little friendly acts, which incline me to entertain a degree of regard for the semi-barbarian politician Moung Byouck; although, I have been so negligent as not to enter into a Correspondence, according to his solicitation.

It was not till the 8th March that the Army broke ground on his return, and commenced retiring to Rangoon. A sufficient number of boats were provided by the Government to convey thither the greatest part of the European Troops: while the remainder accompanied the Native Corps by Land as far as Prome. By the

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early part of May, the whole of the Force, which had advanced on the capital, had arrived at Rangoon ; and some of the Regiments immediately sailed for Calcutta and Madras ; not so much tired, however, of the war, as of eating coarse biscuit, and Buffalow Beef, not forgetting the chances of catching jungle and intermittent Fevers.

In the conclusion of my Narrative, I hope I may be excused for not affording an account of the manners and customs of the Natives of Burmah : my ignorance of the Language will partly plead an excuse for the absence of much important information, indeed beyond a few cursory remarks in a general point of view. The various facts delineated in the course of my Narrative will shew the light in which the nobles may be regarded as Statesmen ; and, with regard to the nature and economy of the national peculiarities and habits, I am convinced much interesting information might still be presented to the public. No one can be more adequate to the task of fixing a just estimate on the Burman Nation, than the Reverend Mr. Judson, whose intimate knowledge of the natives, together with his researches in the kingdom for upwards of 12 years, would enable him to give the world a work at once amusing and desirable.

Pride is certainly the most characteristic trait in the Burman character : it is predomi-

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nant in every branch of the community. The Minister of State and the Head of a common family alike exacts the same homage from their respective dependents. Neither will make his appearance in the streets without being attended with as large a retinue of Servants as his establishment affords. Moung Yanshen, for instance, would often be accompanied with one person who carried a black chattah ; another, his betel box ; a third, a mat and cushion; a fourth, a goglet of water : yet, notwithstanding this show of consequence, the most despicable meanness existed at home, where every thing presented a scene of litter and confusion, without the slightest degree of order or regularity. All the domestics seemed perfectly familiar with the master of the house ; and the greatest uproar often times prevailed, in the midst of which, it was truly ridiculous to remark how the native pride was upheld, by the former creeping on their hands and knees whenever they had to pass their Master or hand him a cup of water. At all times, the sitting posture, with the hands joined in front, is deemed the most respectful.

Ignorance, although the natural concomitant of pride, cannot be said to be general, for almost every peasant can read and write in a style far superior to any other of their qualifications. Often have I admired the pleasing and harmonious inflexions of their voices when

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reading : their pronunciation then is slow, soft, and distinct; but, in colloquial intercourse a discordant volubility is equally as remarkable. Indeed the contrast is so striking that one would scarce imagine it to be the same language being used.

Suspicion, ever has been, and will be for a long time to come, the chief sentiment existing in the dispositions of the rulers of the Government. It is, as well as incredulity, and distrust inherent in all classes of the people. Such is the vigilance and activity of the Ministers, and their Agents, or Police, that the slightest symptoms of sedition, or disaffection, no sooner appear, than they are crushed most effectually—an object of suspicion is annihilated immediately. Suspicion caused the American and several European gentlemen, who were in the Kingdom, to be confined, at the breaking out of the war, and treated most barbarously. Many horrible massacres occurred, particularly during the last few days I was in the Capital. I did not behold any of these acts myself; but, from indubitable authority, I learnt that many of the Cassayers were thrown into the Irawuddee, with heavy weights attached to their necks. It was supposed these unfortunate people might rise; and it was thus deemed advisable to reduce, as secretly as possible, the number of the Natives of that country then residing in Ava.

The Laws of the country may be most

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equitably framed, as we are led to believe by Captain Symes, yet bribery and corruption prevail to so great a degree, that all salutary effects are lost, or perhaps never gained. To illustrate the difficulty in seeking redress, I will state the number of persons through whose hands a memorial of consequence has to pass; and, in doing so, let it be remembered that my information proceeded, verbatim, from an enterprising young English Merchant, who was made prisoner at the commencement of hostilities; and who has been obliged to submit to every extortion incident to an appeal to the King of Burmah.

A Memorial is first read to the King, by the Athandau-zane: and, if favorable, it is marked as such. The Athandau-zane being fee-ed, it passes to the Loargouck to be registered, who, when bribed-sends it on to the Beer-dyke, or Privy Council, the four Attenwoons must be paid; and next, it is forwarded to the Lotoo, in order to pass through the hands of the four Wone-ghees, with a similar tax: the Wone-dowks (Secretaries) of the latter must also receive a douceur, or they will obstruct its passage to the Seree-ghee (head-clerk), this person when satisfied, tells an underling to give in writing the required order, or document, sanctioned in the first instance by His Majesty. The Seree (clerk) must of course be paid for his trouble; and the Peon, to whom it is handed

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for delivery is frequently very troublesome unless rewarded. So much for the encouragement given to our Countrymen towards promoting a reciprocally advantageous traffic. I perceived many little circumstances, and heard a variety of anecdotes, which all convinced me there existed a high spirit of division amongst the principal people: and even at the last, when all were obliged to give assent, many vowed vengeance on some future occasion. For the middling and lower classes, I firmly believe, that nothing would have pleased them better than a general revolution; and several times I heard hopes expressed, that the British would come to the Capital, in order that affairs might be thoroughly reformed. The bulk of the population being so ripe for revolt, it may be a subject of wonder, that the detested Maneza-ghee, so conspicuous for cruelty and tyranny, did not in the course of the war either fall a sacrifice to public animosity, or private resentment, that he still remains, the actual President of all political matters may be considered, in my humble opinion, as a proof of the perfection of their policy; or, at least, that the "order of things" is precisely in that State, which the head of every ruling faction aims at.

An advantage, if it may be called so, arising from the suspicious character of the Burmahs, is, that they are positively afraid of one another.

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However ambitious, or mentally prepared, a Nobleman may be to support a conspiracy; he feels it most dangerous to divulge his secret even to those he is most intimate with; doing so, he fancies, would be his death warrant, and a step to reputation for loyalty to the other. To this little dependence on each other's honor, I conceive, may be attributed, in a great degree, the prevention of plots against the State, notwithstanding the general discontent. Throughout the treatment Dr. Sandford and I received in the Capital, a singular species of cunning may be traced. On our first arrival the Ministers affirmed that no harm should happen to us; but they had no sooner gratified themselves with an infinity of Questions, than we were lodged in one of the most horrid Dungeons that can be imagined. Here, after several days ignominious usage, expecting the horrors of starvation, Dr. Sandford was taken out to be placed in the same house with Mr. Price, and John, in hopes something might be gleaned from conversation, which was to be reported by the latter. At my different visits to Moung Byouck's office, the eccentric behaviour of that Minister was calculated, in his opinion, to prepossess me in his favor, so that I should the more readily acquiesce in his wishes regarding the letters sent to Major Jackson. He would sometimes pass the whole morning with Dr. Sandford and myself in convers-

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ing about the manners and customs of other nations. Of European kingdoms he possessed but little knowledge ; and thought all white people were the Subjects of the King of England. The Burmahs, by Moung Byouck's account, live in much fear of China ; and dread the idea of incurring the resentment of that empire. I asked him if they were not successful, about 50 years ago, over an invading Chinese Army. He replied they were so, but then, they were only fighting against "Mountain China," but that it was "Canton China" they now feared, as that Country could bring ten to one against them.

On one occasion, which I think was during the conferences at Malown, all the European Prisoners in the capital were collected, and questioned most minutely concerning their relatives and friends. They asked me how many Brothers and Sisters I had ; and whether any were married, or likely to be. All my answers were noted down, as I am told, for the information of the King. I never could understand the object of many of their questions. All the real occurrences were carefully concealed from my knowledge : and nothing disclosed that could lead us to suspect the deceit practised on the British Commissioners. Upon the whole, I think I may, with justice, remark, that the Burmahs, in general, are so barbarous and blinded by prejudice

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and obstinacy, that our late triumph over them will not be long acknowledged. Not that I mean to say they will ever deny they were once beaten ; but, when freed from immediate danger, they will look upon things past to have been decreed by Fate ; and not to the want of valour on their part. Their native haughtiness, and extraordinary contempt for every nation but their own, will then return as peculiar as ever. The higher orders consider it derogatory to their rank to study any foreign Language consequently any communication, between them, and any other Nation is attended with considerable difficulty. The lower orders are of an unreflecting and prejudiced disposition, and the most forcible reasonings fail to make any impression on their minds ; more especially in cases which tend to lower their own consequence, or idea of their own national superiority. I have often been highly diverted to hear several of the Natives, if an interpreter were at hand, maintain an argument of the following nature ; " We are a much wiser people than you," said one sitting on the ground, and staring with a face most emblematic of barbarous ignorance, I asked him whether any of his people could make watches, and other European articles which they so much admired : I also asked him how it happened, that, with such a handful of Men, the British had made their way to the heart

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of the Burmah Empire ; My friend allowed the ingenuity of making watches, but declared it was an art of no consequence whatever : and, with regard to their own defeat, he thought it most probable, if another war occurred, the Burmahs would be victorious.

The War, notwithstanding its pitiless operation, with the Burmahs has tended wonderfully to improve the state of society amongst all ranks, to which the Prisoners, who were in the hands of the Burmahs the whole period, can bear testimony. Savage and cruel they still are ; yet, the same violent animosity towards their enemies does not exist as at earlier periods : and even amongst themselves, many degrees of refinement can be traced ; more particularly in their prisons, where tortures and other aggravated afflictions are, by far, less frequent, although, according to the Burmah custom, equally as necessary as formerly.

The first Prisoner of War, taken at Rangoon, they treated most cruelly. The poor fellow, who was taken when in search of pine-apples in the jungle, resisted until overpowered : he was then fettered and dragged up to the capital, suffering every barbarity. Mr. Judson had a glimpse of him as he entered the compound of the prison ; and observed an iron ring round his body, and a cap drawn over his face. No person in Ava was permitted to look

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at the face of this European, until the Ministers of State had seen him ; it being generally supposed, as reported to the King, that he was some great English General, second only to Sir Archibald himself. However, they soon discovered, the captive to be merely an unfortunate Private belonging to the 1st Corps of Madras Europeans.

In the month of May 1825, a Soldier of 'The Royals,' while loitering at a very little distance from Prome, fell into the hands of a party ready to seize him. They had no sooner made him a prisoner, than they pinioned his arms behind his back, bound him on a Poney, by fastening his legs underneath its belly, and drawing his neck with a rope towards that of the animal. He was kept thus for a day and a night, tormented by much barbarous usage. On arriving at a Camp three pair of chains were clenched on his ancles, and an iron ring with a long chain attached round his neck, the latter being made fast to a substantial building, he was exhibited like a baited bull, and had to endure the inhuman jests of hosts of Spectators. He was next put into a Boat, with an armed force, and sent to Ava. The chain from his neck was now secured to the bottom of the Boat, which, encountering a squall, was upset, and the poor fellow nearly lost his life. When rescued from the water, they fastened him to a tree and

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left him exposed to a boisterous night. At Malown, where Prince May-mya-boo, a half-brother of the King, commanded a Burmah of some rank, had the cruelty to pluck out by the roots some of the hairs of his beard, which caused the blood to flow. This act being noticed by the Prince, he ordered the Burmah not only an immediate punishment, but sent him up in chains to the Capital, where he underwent some weeks imprisonment for his wanton cruelty. The Prisoners, if they survived their arduous march to the Capital, and the Old Man's cruelty, were afterwards generally lodged in tolerable comfort, and billetted on people who could be depended upon, and who were allowed a certain quantity of rice per month for their maintenance. Every member of the male branch of the Royal Family has the same character for humanity as the King and Prince May-mya-boo. The Queen is a perfect Jezebel; and her brother Mane-za-ghee is as closely allied in principle as in blood: (I hope I shall never be in their power again) my farewell remark shall be the recital of a true anecdote. Mane-za-ghee, when secretly assured by Mr. Price, that if the British were forced to come to the Capital, they were resolutely determined to subvert the present dynasty, and beseeching him at the same time if he had any regard for his Sovereign, to accelerate the negociations for Peace; the Prince coolly asked if he had any chance of being

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favored by the British. Mr. Price replied, none whatever.

In attempting to give an idea of the domestic habits of the Burmahs, my best plan will be to relate a few particulars of those persons with whom I was so intimately acquainted. First, nothing used to astonish me so much as the food of the Soldiers who accompanied us on our march to Ava. It consisted in nothing more than rice, leaves, and vegetables of various descriptions, but all apparently as simple as a Cabbage Leaf. Their cheerful performance of most laborious duties, with such insignificant rations, made me often fancy what excellent Soldiers they would become under our discipline. A roller of rice swung on their arms, when villages or granaries were not to be met with during the day or days, together with some favorite leaves, sure to be found in the Jungle, supplied all their wants. The eccentricities of the "Shark" and his family now claim my attention. Notwithstanding Moung Yanshen's consequence in the streets, when decked out in fine silk cloths and followed by four or five attendants; he verified at home the truth of the old adage, that "pride and meanness are generally coupled together." Indeed every one of his actions tended to prove this fact, particularly when it happened that he was placed under arrest for failing to furnish his complement of Ponies for the King's service. During the period of his confinement I was much

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surprised at the difference of his Breakfasts and Dinners, which were sent him regularly every day. A pair of handsome Owks with china cups and dishes, which I had never seen before, were brought out on this occasion, and filled with all the niceties the market of Ava could produce. The object of this ostentation was to impress the people in charge of him with a high idea of his consequence, for I remarked on his release our meals became again very scanty. An Owk is a high round wooden dish with a lofty comical cover, ornamented and painted according to taste: a platter is made to lodge on the top, which contains a number of dishes, filled with a variety of curries, fish, &c. under the platter is a space sufficient for many other articles. A second Owk is merely filled with boiled rice. In this manner, nothing is more common than to see the dinners of even the Ministers, and other great persons conveyed about the streets by lads who carry a pair of Owks across their shoulders. I used to be much pleased if Moung Byouck's dinner arrived at his office, previous to my leaving him, as he never failed to invite me to partake on those occasions. The King, as well as his Ministers, eat with their fingers, and only make use of spoons for gravies and other liquids. Simple nature, for a long time, will have a great sway over their unsophisticated minds.

I must now endeavour to enumerate a few of

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the graces of the Lady of the Shark. This creature who bore a strong resemblance to the popular idea of a witch, roused her faculties the first thing in the morning by the invigorating effects of the Betel-nut, and smoking three or four cheroots; she could then muster resolution to give orders for the purchase of the articles required from the Bazar. This, in Burmah, is attended with some trouble, but with a considerable degree of satisfaction, for according to the principles of buying and selling established in that country, servants have little or no opportunity of defrauding their Masters or Mistresses. The value of every commodity in the market is fixed, by custom and regulation, according to so much weight of silver or lead. There being no coin current in the country, every family has the prudence to be supplied with weights and scales of their own, together with a hammer, chisel, and block, to divide the metal; certain shells also are allowed by law to complete a balance. Considerable dispute generally rose between Yanshen's wife and her domestic regarding the weight and the purity of the metal, ere the latter was dispatched to the Bazar, who had the same routine to go through wherever a purchase was made. In the mean time the rice would be boiling, and perhaps the mat, on which they all sit, cleared of the rubbish and dirt the accumulations the day before. On the return of the servant, bringing a supply of fish, vegetables, chillies, paun leaves, tobacco, &c. break-

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fast would soon be cooked, and deposited in the Owk. In the event of Moung Yanshen's absence no one dared to consume the fresh provisions, unless he had sanctioned their so doing. I generally contrived to get my breakfast about 9 o'clock, my fare being inferior to the Rajah's, and superior to that of the common domestics, it was a matter of indifference when I took my meals. Not so with Ummee (a familiar appellation) who always waited her lord's return. Nothing could be more disgusting than to see her ladyship stuff herself with immense handfulls of rice squeezed into a lump, with a bit of meat, or fish currie, in the centre: raw chillies, and onions, she would also demolish in such abundance, that one would imagine she enjoyed the pains of suffocation: after copious draughts of water, came the Burman luxury of eating tea leaves, mixed with oil and garlic, by way of a *bonne bouche*. Eating, smoking, and exposing the bed-clothes to the sun, composed Ummee's sole occupation from morning until night: not an hour elapsed, and it was the case with the whole family, without her devouring some unwholesome and indigestible Food, such as, young bamboo, nuts, unripe Indian corn, and green tamarinds, &c. The Burmahs are uncommonly fond of the latter, one of the most acid of all fruits, and which they eat with salt. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon the Owk would be replenished; and each member of the

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family take supper, as appetite or convenience suited. This profuse but coarse way of living easily accounted for the lean and haggard appearance of the good wife, who was continually complaining of head-aches and fevers, and swallowing powders ; to aid, I imagine, her powers of digestion, which, unless like the gizzard of a hen, must have needed some most effectual assistance. Another resource for Burman ladies of similar habits is the comfort afforded by a violent method of champooing. In witnessing the process of this remedy for every complaint in the country, you would fancy the natives were well skilled in anatomy ; every joint is rubbed and pressed with *great precision ;* the head, in particular, turned and moved in every position, as unnatural as it is horrible to behold. It required a person of some strength to administer the nicer parts of champooing which appeared to me to be little short of strangulation. I have often witnessed my lady, or a visitor, lying on the floor, and being champooed with the feet of a heavy man, while they were diverting themselves with a recital of some of my barbarous oddities, and eyeing me, now and then, as if I were a tame baboon. The Burmahs are by no means ignorant of all the good things Providence has designed for our use : but, such is the parsimonious nature of their dispositions, that they prefer gratifying their appetites by quantity, rather than by quality, except at the expense

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of their neighbours. The cattle and poultry, abounding in the country, are considered dainties too great to be daily consumed, even by the middle classes. An ox is seldom slaughtered till age has rendered him unfit to work. Should a beast meet with a premature departure of life, it is not considered the less dainty. I remember something occasioned the death of one of the Shark's cattle during the night. In the morning, he and his family consoled themselves for the loss by a hearty repast at breakfast, and making presents to all their neighbours: a plentiful supply was also placed before me; and on my declining their bounty, so far from feeling annoyed, as I expected, one of them took it away with an air that spoke most plainly, 'so much the better, there will be the more for us.' I could often judge, by the behaviour of Moung Yanshen's two sons, if peace was likely to be concluded, or not. When matters were favorable, I was deemed worthy to participate in their meals, and amusements: at other times I received not the slightest notice. One afternoon, after being kindly treated for several days I was astonished at the unusual scantiness of my dinner: on expressing my displeasure, one of the son's explained the circumstance by opposing his two fore-fingers, and with a sneer remarked. The English and Burmah's were not brothers. No Dandies in Bond-street could possess greater personal vanity than these two young men.

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They were continually displaying to me the fine proportion of their limbs, and the rich tattooing of their thighs and part of their bodies. Above all they were particularly proud of their hair. The Burmahs, in general, have reason to be so. Their fine long black hair is national I think : but few other Indian nations possess the same peculiarity. The Ministers, and people of high rank, chiefly, tied their hair in a knot on the centre of their heads, encircled by a small white muslin handkerchief narrowly folded. The other classes wore their hair in a knot on one of their temples, with or without being folded with a handkerchief. The woman tie their hair in a knot at the back of their necks, and, to increase the size of the knot and length of the tail, an artificial addition of hair called Sezzoo is mixed with it. I found the same fashion prevailed throughout the whole country between Rangoon and Ava, a distance of not less than 650 miles. The Burmahs are uncommonly fond of looking-glasses: every individual, of the family I lived with, possessed one, and they did not fail to indulge their vanity very frequently during the day. The young men, in particular, would bestow much time and attention in folding their hair tastefully with their gown-bown, (handkerchiefs.) In the course of an afternoon I have noticed them return several times to new arrange their head-dress, which one time would look very neat

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and trim, and in a few minutes afterwards it would be seen flowing about their shoulders quite *dégagé*.

The dress of the men is very simple, a piece of silk or cloth is wrapped round the waist, in the same style as the natives of India, which, with a long white Jacket and Waistcoat without collars, compose the whole of their apparel. The Soldiers and middle-classes wear a thick black glazed Jacket. The dress of the women is most unbecoming and scarce within the bounds of decency: it consists in a single piece of cloth or silk, called Tamine. The breadth, three cubits and a span, is prescribed by law, which it is not safe to violate. The women of Arracan it is said, wear them of five cubits broad, fastened round the waist by a tuck in front. I have heard this garment, equally inconvenient as unsuitable, is prescribed by the laws, and I am inclined to believe it is the case, having often heard the women complain bitterly of its want of comfort: they also wear a thin white muslin Jacket; and Bangles, Necklaces, Earrings, and Noserings, are as much in vogue with them, as with all oriental females. If deputies from the Burman Ladies appeared on the plains of Abra, ere the Genius of love took his flight from this Earth, they must have been discarded for a total deficiency of female charms except a soft pleasing voice; they have neither symme-

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try of figure to boast of, nor fascinating features to enrapture. It is lamentable, however, to observe the low estimation in which the females of Burmah are regarded: those of the lower orders are treated little better than slaves. I often saw women, in all parts of the Kingdom, whose faces were tattooed all over, and thus made very black: these I learnt belonged to some very low tribe, and were attached as slaves to different families. The complexion of the Natives is varied; in some parts it is very dark, and in others rather light.

The rules of matrimony are adapted to the capricious taste of the nation. I believe the payment of very moderate Fees by a husband and wife to the judge will relieve the parties from all conjugal bonds: but notwithstanding this facility of divorce, I fancy there is in the Burmah Country as much matrimonial affection and fidelity as in any Country, almost, in the world. The religion of the Burmahs is of a very primitive nature; perfectly unadorned in its ceremonies: far be it from me to attempt to define its eccentricities. Indeed, I conceive it to be of such an original and interesting nature, that any works relating to it would be read with avidity. The highest respect is paid to the Priests (Pownghees), whose dress is composed of a yellow silk, or cotton cloth tucked round their waists and then folded over their shoulders. They are a sickly-looking race of

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beings, which arises from their abstemious way of living and various customs: their hair is cut as close as possible; and I never recollect seeing a hat or cap on their heads: they lead a life of continency, and are not allowed by their religion to mingle in matters of mere temporal interest. Their occupation is to instruct children in reading and writing, and, of course, attend all religious processions. Every morning in Ava, the forlorn-looking Pownghees in their yellow gowns paced the different streets to collect sustenance for themselves, and their brethren, for the day. Each carried a dish; and sometimes they were attended by little boys who carried another; they were mute and unobtrusive in their operations, and merely stopped opposite the doors of the houses as they passed along, without turning their heads to the right or left. If neither a cup of rice, nor a fish, (ready cooked), were forthcoming, they proceeded to the next habitation; and so on till a sufficiency were obtained, which never failed to be the case. A custom prevailed amongst the lower orders, which I can only attribute to superstition; it was observed by those who had not the means of making a daily or weekly contribution to the Priests; the custom consists in taking about a handful of rice from their morning supply, which, in a saucer, is raised above the head, with both hands accompanied at the same time with a

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short prayer. The dedication is then laid on a shelf; and is not thrown away, or given to the dogs till several hours afterwards. It puzzled me also, at one period, on seeing at Sunset a general consternation; every person, on a certain signal, took a stick and made a violent noise on the floor, or walls of the house; some, in addition stamped, and others roared; in short I wondered what was the matter I have since learned this proceeding was a supposed charm against Cholera, which at that time raged. I remember also Mr. Price told me, at the same period, that the Ministers entertained a notion, that infectious disease would attack our Army; *and thus they hoped* the Cat would be deprived of its claws. A religious congregation of the Natives is one of the most pleasing spectacles to be witnessed in the country:—to a person not conversant with their language and ideas, it argues much in favor of the simplicity and innocence of its tenets. What can be more natural than the women forming the leading part of their processions bearing on their heads the first fruits of the earth? These, are followed by the musicians who are more worthy of so refined a name than those of any other Asiatic Nation. Then come in respective order all the families who wish to attend prayers. The Pownghees find their way individually to the Pagodas or Sammy houses, where mats are laid for their convenience. The

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people being seated down sideways, and the oblations duly arranged, all fronting the Priests, the ceremony commences by the Priests uttering a few short sentences, to which the people with one voice repeat responses. It then concludes by the hearers raising themselves on their knees, with their hands joined in front, and listening to a very long extempore harangue hurried over by the chief Pownghee, which I imagine is an appeal for divine favor. Previous to the offerings being removed, each basketful, or Owk, receives a benediction : those intended for the Priests are carried away by little boys, and the remainder is thrown promiscuously into large stone vases, which are always in the courts, to be divided amongst the poor. The Burmahs at their prayers never make a confession ; but appeal to, and supplicate, their Gods according to the richness of their own offerings: that is, if they bestow an unusual degree of generosity towards the Pownghees and poor, they, agreeable to their natural ideas, expect an ample return. At the conclusion of a religious meeting each individual strikes a Bell, with the horn of an antelope, three distinct times, as a further invocation on the Gods. A certain number of Bells are attached to every Pagoda. The great Bell belonging to the Showay Tagown Pagoda at Rangoon measures no less than 10 feet in height and about 6 feet in diameter at bottom ; where the thickness of

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the rim is not less than nine inches. The Bell is celebrated throughout the Empire. The people in Ava, were very indignant when they heard of the intention of our Government to convey it to Calcutta. I have had many hearty laughs in explaining to Moung Yanshen how the orders to this effect were frustrated by the circumstance of the raft upsetting, on which the bell was being embarked on board a Transport. It remained at the bottom of the Rangoon river for many months; till at length it was restored to the Pagoda, amid the acclamations of the natives. The bell must be of immense value for there is evidently much gold and silver in the composition of the metal of which it is composed.

Though last, the innumerable Pagodas all over the face of the country, do not present the least distinguishing and characteristic feature. It is far above my knowledge to explain distinctly the origin and object of these edifices with their huge griffin-shaped guards at the entrances of the Courts; the sacred writings say;—that, "the person who builds and dedicates a Pagoda will in the next life, or in the next transmigration, become a Nat of the sacred mountain; or may be a chieftain, or rich person, in this world."

The din of War has ceased for many months, and Man, in this quarter, is again in

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amity with his fellows; and we believe that no controversies for a long time will re-kindle the flames of discord: Heaven may ordain it so, and as probably decree otherwise; that which, in our vanity, we do not see, may presently happen; inscrutable are the ways of our Great Parent, he manifests one day his power to save us from the Lion, and in the next, by a blighting breeze he summons us to his presence to account for our talents. Far from these regions, so replete with sorrow, and woeful vicissitude, is now transported the spirit of my Sister-prisoner, a malignant fever carried off this amiable Lady, to the haven of rest, in a few months only after her release from bondage. She truly was an ornament to her Sex; and had she been destined to tarry for a lengthened period on this globe, her virtues and mental accomplishments would have shone, and shed comforts, on the hearts of many poor unenlightened beings; and very possibly her elegant pen would have delighted an applauding society, more perfectly, with her tale of suffering, in the cause of Salvation to the Heathen. How awfully does the doom of Mrs. Judson contrast with the fate of the being who knew not, nor cared for, the Psalmist's warning, "O put not your trust in Princes, &c." The self-deluded interpreter met his death in the Dungeon, in which he had caused many to suffer. It appears that while the definitive negociations for Peace

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were being pursued at Yandaboh, that John Leavindiere did his best to infuse ideas of a more than suspicious nature, into the mind of his Burmah Majesty as to the conduct of Mr. Price; against whom, on account of his reputation with all classes, the interpreter was fired with a fit of jealousy. In Mr. Price's absence, John affirmed that the British were compelled to sue for peace, owing to their failure at Bhurtpore; and also declared the Burmahs were being deceived by Mr. Price. The King at first partially credited these impudent assertions; when fortunately Mr Price, on his return to the capital was enabled to take with him some Calcutta Newspapers giving an account of the capture of Bhurtpore by the Company's Forces. This turned the scale at once, and the interpreter, on being banished from his Majesty's presence, received the Sentence of Starvation to death, which, I understand was carried into execution without the slightest mitigation of its consequent horrors.

Translation of a Burman Prayer.

Oh Lord, filled with glory and power unspeakable; who art infinitely more excellent than all creatures; whose words are by far more valuable than the words of all other beings; who art wise, far beyond the wisdom

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of man ; and whom men nor angels* cannot equal : who art not subject to misery, nor trouble of mind ; and to whom all secrets are laid open ; who canst confer happiness on all beings ; and knowledge on the ignorant : therefore art thou called the Lord. What is now said is but a little ; the whole life would not suffice to speak it all. Thee therefore do I worship. The Laws uttered by thee, are eighty and four thousand ; these also do I worship ; and I worship the people who abide by these commandments. Therefore on account of worshipping these three, keep me free from the ninety and six diseases that assail the body; from the thirty and two accidents and misfortunes that happen to man ; and from the twenty and five unlucky circumstances that befal him ; from the sixteen sources of trouble ; from the ten crimes and their punishments; from the eight calamitous conditions ; and from the five enemies : from all these deliver me, and grant unto me, gold, silver, precious stones, sons and daughters, relations and friends, servants and slaves, guards and protectors : these grant me, and grant me also a good reputation. Fill me with all these, and after death let me reach that place, where I may hear the Law of the Creator : thus, old I shall not become, nor sick, nor shall I die, but shall exist unto eternity.

* Or Nats : beings superior to Man.

FINIS.

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